

HUSQVARNA 125CR: NOT HUSKY ENOUGH

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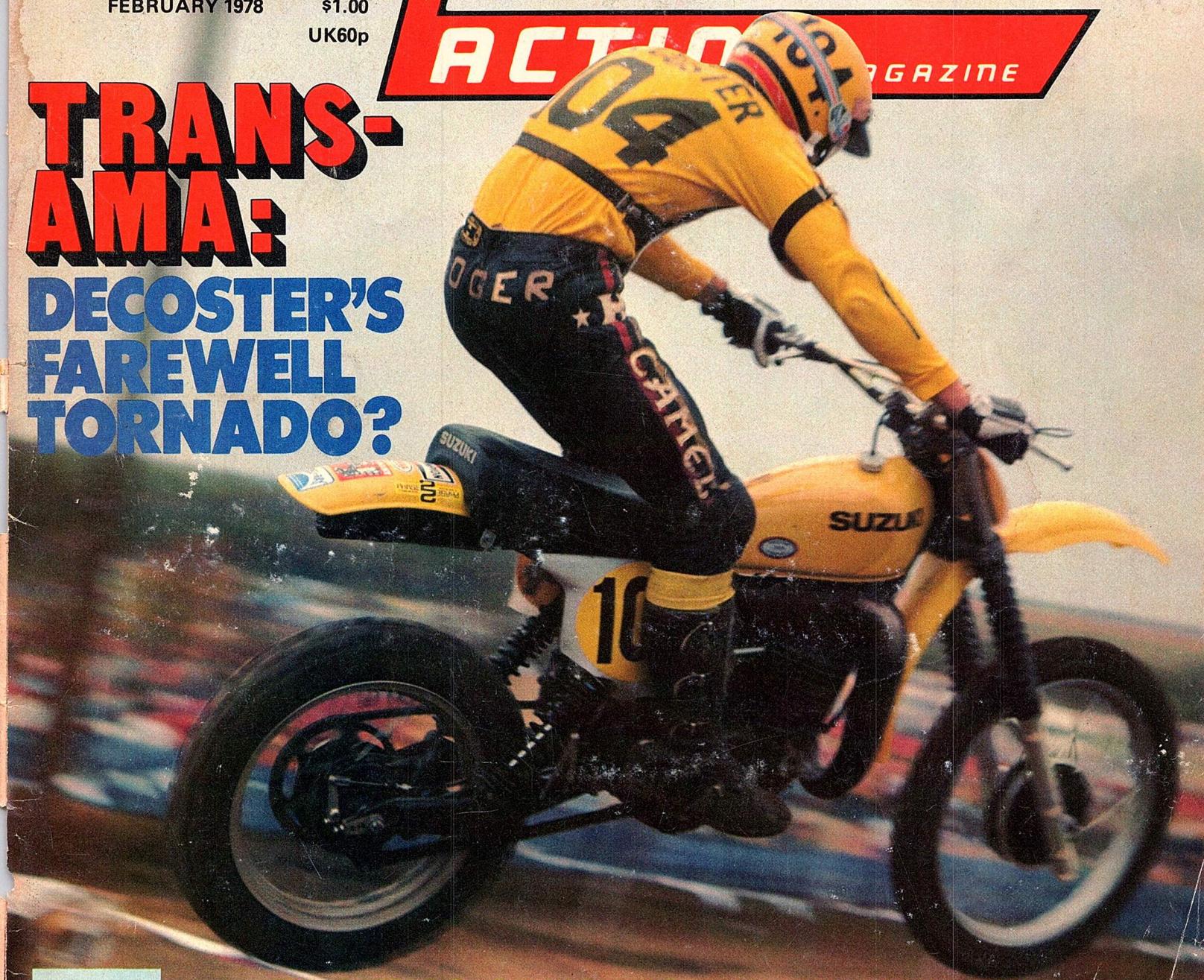
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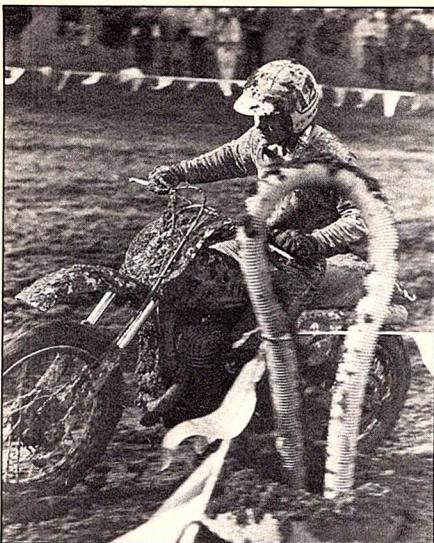
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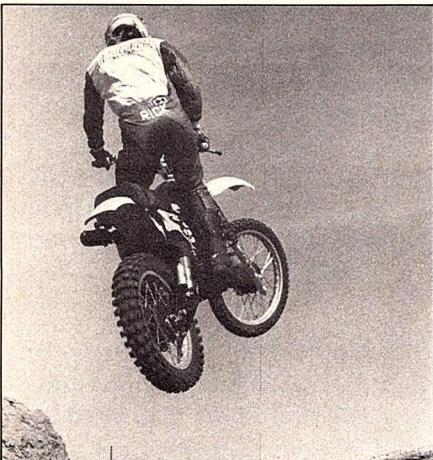
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TRANS-AMA



AUDITIONS



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FEBRUARY 1978
VOLUME SIX NUMBER TWO MAGAZINE

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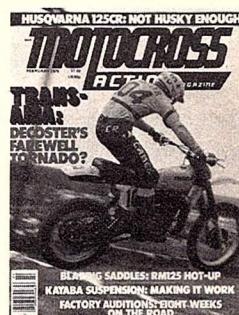
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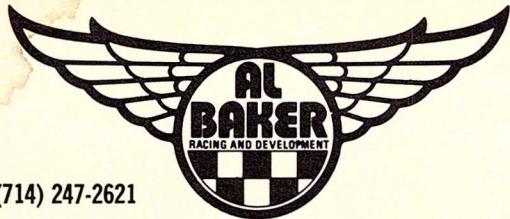
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COVER: Rocket Roger DeCoster keeps his hot hand going in the Trans-AMA. Will Roger return, and if he does can he win again? Photography by Dick Miller

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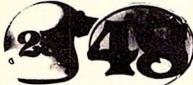
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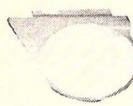


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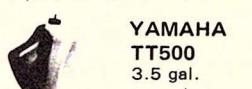


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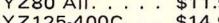
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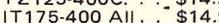
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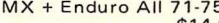
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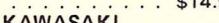


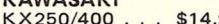


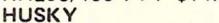


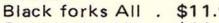


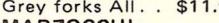


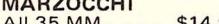


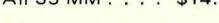


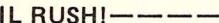








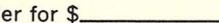




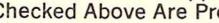


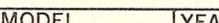












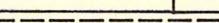






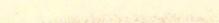














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On The Mainjet

By Dick Miller

Dear AMA: you win, I/we lose!

Dear Fellow Biker,

You are probably like me and greatly dislike form letters. (Very true.) There are times, however, when they are needed and serve a worthwhile purpose. I sincerely believe this is one of those times. (You've misjudged the situation.)

I was very disappointed to learn from our membership department that your AMA membership has not been renewed. You are greatly valued as a member (bullshit) and I am writing to ask that you reconsider and send your renewal to me immediately.

□ The above letter, except for my comments in parentheses, was sent to me after I asked the AMA (American Motorcyclist Association) to refund my \$8 check with which I had renewed my umpteen-year membership. They wanted \$12 but I had sent them \$8 and told them to forget about the \$4 AMA magazine. No deal, said the follow-up AMA letter, so I said, never mind.

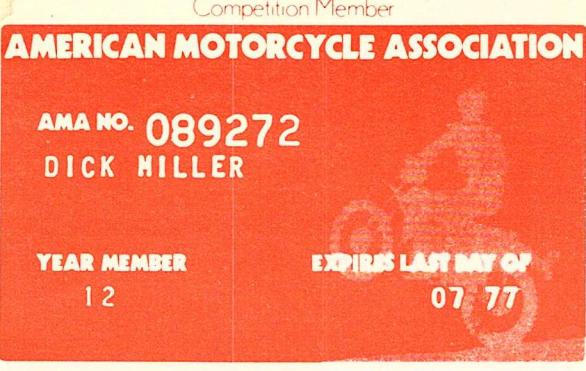
When I first joined the AMA (It was then called the American Motorcycle Association and changed to Motorcyclist a short time ago), the annual membership dues were \$2. You had to have an AMA card in order to race (you could only put applied for on so many entries), since most events were AMA-sanctioned. You also had to have a District AMA card (\$2) for each class you raced in and each division of racing. At one time I held four District class cards. You had to have one card in order to obtain the other. The AMA card was cheap enough at the time, and most of us felt that it was for our best interests, so it was easy to renew each year. The District 37 card seemed more worth the \$2, since you received (physically) your earned number at the end of the year and it went to cover the incidental costs of running the District. All the labor was voluntary by elected local club members and officials. We were

ignored for the most part in those days by the AMA, and although we were one of the largest and most well-organized Districts, we didn't have many problems until money started to interest the AMA's hierarchy.

The major problems started in the '70s. The Dirtdiggers M/C Club were being hassled by the AMA for various reasons related to their Hopetown race (formerly Corriganville). It was one of the first events in this country that showed the top European motocrossers to the U.S. public and that was a problem for the AMA. Edison Dye had been throwing races across the U.S. using top European motocrossers, and although he made many mistakes, he had managed to successfully establish a popular series, the Inter-Am and Trans-AM races. In a bitter fight between Edison and the AMA over control of the series, the AMA won by being appointed the FIM representative in the U.S. European riders could not ride Dye's races without being suspended when they returned to Europe. Instead of taking lessons from Edison's mistakes, the AMA almost killed the Trans-AMA by making more. It has survived, but its future is questionable when DeCoster retires.

During this same period the AMA got into the insurance business, and the AMA membership dues was being argued about in our District. We almost seceded from the AMA, and the only thing that prevented it was a visit by some of the AMA hierarchy to a volatile District 37 meeting. One of the Districts in New England had already seceded because of the AMA's intervention in the running of their enduros. I was president of the Checkers M/C at the time and we, although small in size (35 members) had been the number one club in District racing for 23 of the last 24 years, competing against clubs with ten times as many members. We were losing our desert areas because of the BLM boondoggle and were getting minimal assistance from the AMA. Our District's threat of secession was the only thing that got their attention, since we represented a very substantial portion of the AMA membership.

During this same period of time



mandatory helmet legislation was happening all over the country due to the increasing popularity of motorcycles. We stopped it in California with virtually no help from the AMA, and in fact it was, of all people, the Hell's Angels who turned the tide. It was a key issue, because if California had fallen the rest of the states would follow suit. The AMA can claim little credit for the victory.

While we were losing our desert land, and motocross was beginning to take hold, the AMA lent very little leadership in the area of motocross racing. Maybe it was for the best, since when they really became involved it became worse. Our District MX events were no contest for the local promoters. Struggling under the AMA rules and guidelines, District 37 clubs would get maybe 50 total entries at events while the newly organized CMC was bulging at the seams with a 1000-plus membership and 200-300 riders at an event. Motocross was a bastard child of the AMA and they were forced into dealing with it because of its increasing popularity. Their real interests were in Class C and road racing, since the powers that be at the time were financially involved. Many feel that very little has changed regarding those feelings.

The big breakup in the AMA came after our rates were more than tripled and the insurance thing was being forced on us. A Watergate-type scandal evolved, with several resignations. New regimes were started to supposedly bring the AMA closer to its members and correct the inequities of the past. Most of us thought that something constructive finally was going to happen. It didn't. The turnover at Westerville was pretty rapid, and high salaries weren't paying for competent leadership. In the interim, the desert riders were forced into zoned plots of land for racing purposes, and this had the predictable outcome of overuse, giving the environmentalists a useful tool to help

eliminate us. If you live in Ohio, why worry about the desert!

Motocross, as it gained the full attention of the AMA (read that profits), started to suffer. John Lancione, our first motocross referee/manager, started to struggle under the situation. He wanted to go back to his business because it wasn't fun anymore and the pay wasn't worth the abuse. He didn't tell me that; I have known him long enough to read between the lines. Support was lacking, and John was a rider's referee. It seemed if you were a rider, the AMA was the enemy, not an ally. Things were happening that were not making good sense. One of John's replacements spent more time drinking than officiating, and he was finally ousted. Mike DiPrete finally lent some order to the MX scene, but he seems to be caught between a rock and a hard spot. When the AMA's interest should be in the protection and promotion of the rider and the sport, it is instead a police action with very little guidance. We don't need more capricious rules to enforce, we need help, if indeed the AMA is supposed to represent the motorcyclist.

Promoters of motorcycle events are struggling under the AMA's costs and guidelines and many are falling by the wayside. In the events that several of the promoters are making big money off of, the riders are not sharing in the profits. If you can believe it, the rider has to pay his entry to put on a show. Can you imagine Peter Frampton paying a fee to sing at a concert? I can't help but wonder why a percentage-type arrangement isn't established with promoters so that the rider profits when attendance figures go up. The AMA's past performance shows that they have more concern for their monies than for the participants.

Several months ago I sat in on the initial meeting of the AMA's newly selected committees for racing. It was my first contact with the new AMA president, Bob Rudolph. His dictatorial

Continued on page 66

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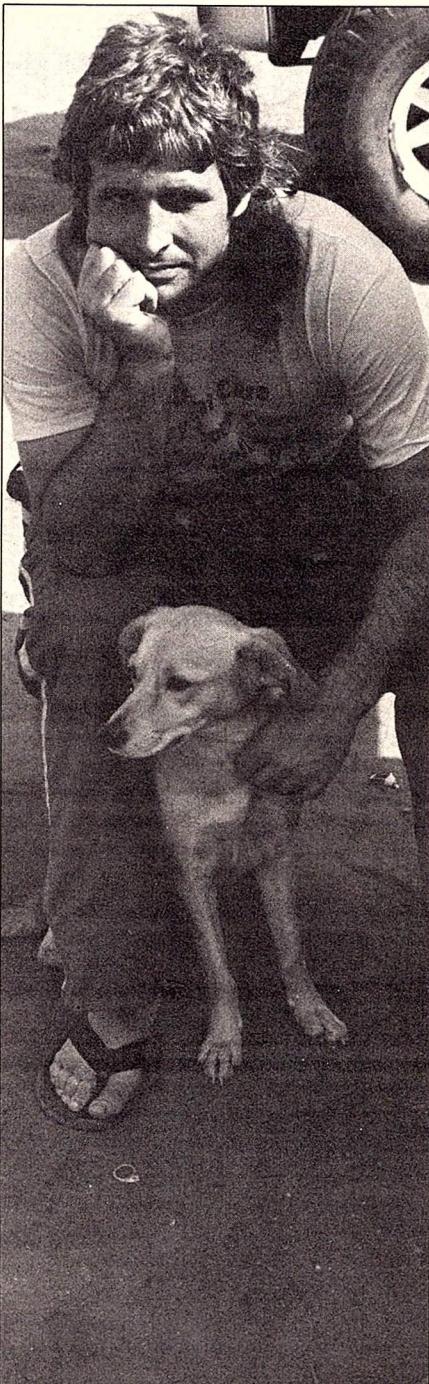
By Jody Weisel

□ Being a professional motocrosser is a long, hard row to hoe. There is very little money, a lot of long drives, considerable risk in eating at Burger Biggie and the loneliness of the road. The hot setup is to take your girlfriend, but lovely Louella has to stay at home and feed the chickens. Rarely do I get lonely enough to want to travel from my home in California to Red Bed, Michigan, in a van with Luscious Louella and six chickens. I was tempted to try it once during the Super-Series, but it was molting season for one hen, two decided to hatch chicks and the rooster couldn't be coaxed off the top of the garage. Finally in desperation I hit the road alone again.

When I travel I don't like to stop. It is a lesson that I learned from a famous Texas motocrosser named Wyman Priddy. Wyman rode for Team Kawasaki, and if he had to race in Florida on Sunday he would figure out how long it took to get to Florida in time for practice and then leave at exactly that time. The longer you race and the more of a beating your kidneys take over the years, the more you have to stop. Dick Miller likes to tell the story of ushering the Team Husky riders across the country in 1970 and having to stop every 70 miles so some great name in motocross could relieve himself. So I'm a blitzkrieg driver turning in long hours in the driver's seat listening to the CB and watching my radar detector. But it is lonely on the road.

Like a lot of motocrossers, I decided to get a dog. A dog is the perfect National motocross circuit companion. You can tell her after an utter defeat how well you did and she'll never know the difference. A dog with the right type of voice and teeth will protect your belongings while you're trying to get a Super Mongo Burger and an order of fries. The dog is perfect for traveling. My dog's name is Asia and Asia likes to sit up by the dashboard of the van and bark at cows. She will also bark at horses, sheep, dogs and fire hydrants.

There are some disadvantages, of



course. A maid at a Holiday Inn found Asia sleepin' with all four feet sticking straight up on the bed while I was out swimming. You would have thought that I had invited the complete red light district of Tijuana into my room. They suggested that I take my dog out to

special accommodations that they provided out back. To both Asia and my surprise, it turned out to be a doghouse, and some privateer was living in there already. As soon as the manager left we trotted back up to the room and watched an old rerun of Lassie.

The National motocross circuit is 42 weeks long and only comes back to the same town every couple of months, so the dog and I grew very close. When I would go out practicing Asia would chase along behind and do cross-ups over the jumps. I never went anywhere that I didn't take my dog. Louella wasn't interested in going on the road. Mechanics just doubled the bills. So, the dog became my constant companion.

But I had to go to Europe for a couple of weeks, and what with quarantine and isolation the dog wouldn't be allowed in before the races were over. While I was gone, Tony DiStefano's mechanic, Alan Hahn, agreed to take care of Asia. I don't suppose it was Alan's fault, some dogs just get a little wild when left on their own. Seems that Asia failed to come home several nights while I was gone.

When I got back from Europe I had a few weeks to prepare for the Trans-AMA. So, while I am getting everything sanoed out, fixing the van and dialing in all the equipment, I figure I can always count on my good old traveling partner, Asia.

The day before we prepared to load up and head east, Asia had five puppies and refused to leave them for more than two minutes. Louella can't leave the chickens, Asia can't leave the puppies, and I have to face ten weeks on the road alone again.

So, rather than force myself to drive all those miles without any companionship, I motored down to the pet store and checked out the stock. There was a pretty nice looking rhesus monkey, but he bit the pet store owner four times while he was trying to gift-wrap it. A boa constrictor caught my eye next, and I actually got four blocks with it before it curled up underneath the

brake pedal and almost killed both of us. I like excitement, but I couldn't see going over 6000 miles without ever stopping for a stop sign. Back in the store, while the owner tried to untangle the snake from my foot, I eyeballed the perfect pet. A nice, friendly looking duck.

Ducks appear to be about the friendliest bird known to man. I walked over and bent down by his cage and he waddled right over and snapped his bill shut on my right eyelash. The owner was checking over his liability insurance as I left with the duck sitting on my lap. The duck was just like Asia. It sat in my lap and quacked every time we passed a pigeon, Colonel Sanders or large body of water. I think that the duck and I would have been great together on the Trans-AMA, but ducks have one major problem. The duck and I were cruising down the road and having a wonderful time. It was sitting in my lap while I drove. About 15 minutes down the road I had to stop and open the suitcase and get out a clean pair of pants. The duck was probably excited to get out of its cage, I figured, but 15 minutes later I was changing my pants again. I made the duck sit in the passenger seat, which it made a mess of every 15 minutes. No bowel control. When I pulled back into the pet shop parking lot the owner ran out and tried to put up a "Closed" sign, but I beat him to the door.

Now I was really mad! I was late in getting started. It looked like I was destined to go alone, but not in my state of mind. I drove back home and laid down the law to the whole cast of lazy louts. Lovely Louella was packed in ten minutes. I got Asia and her puppies into the back of the van and stacked the chicken cages on my toolbox. If I was going, then everyone was going!

Next year I'm going alone. Never again will I spend ten weeks with a complaining Louella, whining puppies, cackling chickens and an excess of eggs. Worse than all that was trying to get the rooster off the top of the Team Husky truck after every race.

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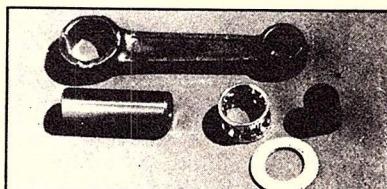
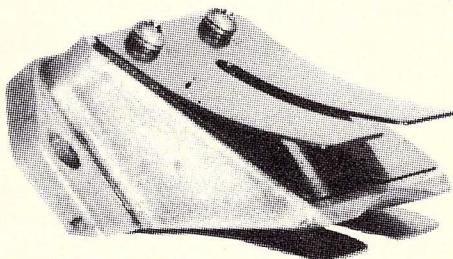
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By Holbert Holquist

WEINERT ONE MORE TIME

In the continuing saga of 1977, Jammin' Jimmy Weinert, who broke his shoulder at Hangtown and missed the complete 250 National series, and broke his arm at Saddleback, missing the complete 500 National series, came back to race a couple of Trans-AMA rounds. But before the series was over he crashed his car, cracking a vertebra. Needless to say, Weinert hopes to have a better year in 1978. Please forward all rabbit feet and four-leaf clovers to the Kawasaki Motor Corp.

* * * *

CAN-AM WITHDRAWS

The Canadian motorcycle firm, Can-Am, has withdrawn from the Trans-AMA after five rounds. The reasons are shrouded in mystery, but most opinions range from poor sales to poor results. Jimmy Ellis has been seen entering the corporate offices of two motorcycle manufacturers of Japanese origin. Do not expect to see Can-Am on the racing circuit next year.

* * * *

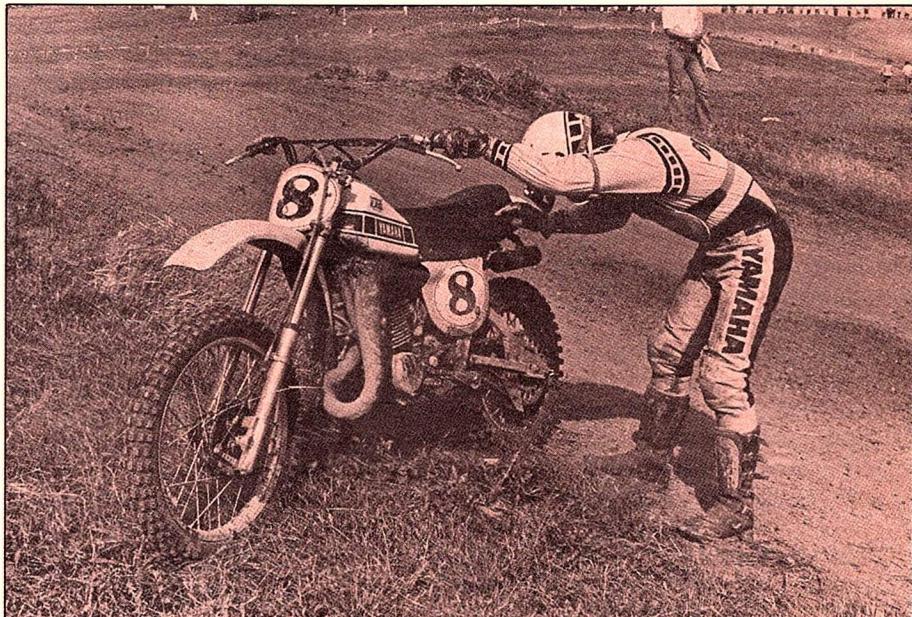
O'BRIEN NUMBERS

Remember the trick numbers that all the riders on the Nationals are using? Tony D. has his made by Ray Martino, but the rest of the National guys get their numbers from Sean O'Brien from Texas. Well, the AMA told the riders they couldn't use them because they didn't meet the requirements of the rule book (block numbers). The big-name guys refused to remove their fancy numbers and the AMA dropped the issue.

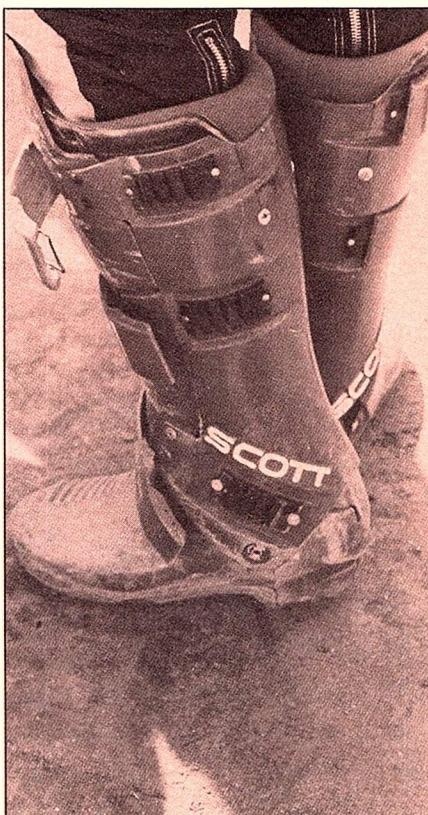
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TEAM MX FOX DECIMATED

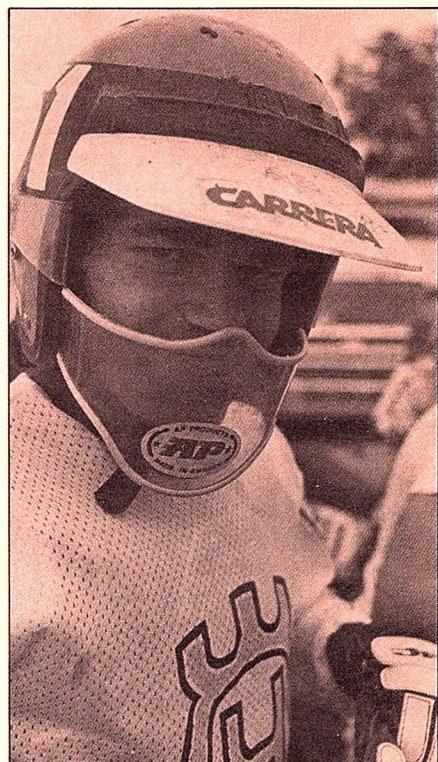
Mark Barnett has signed to ride for Team Suzuki for 1978. Sixteen-year-old Mark will be joining Danny LaPorte in the 125 class. Texan Steve Wise is rumored to be talking to Honda. It is almost assured that Wise, the highest-



Some riders never get credit where credit is due. Yamaha's Rick Burgett is always accused of bending his handlebars. That is not always true. Rick is also talented at throwing his chain. Here during Trans-AMA action he stops to put it back on.



The long-awaited Scott boots are at long last almost here. These prototypes were spotted on Danny LaPorte's feet. The plastic boots have hidden buckles, built-in knee pad and soft foam lining.



Marty Moates wants to return to Europe for the 250 World Championship chase next year. Husky is helping him now, but he will try his hardest to return to foreign shores. Husqvarna may help him, but we are betting on a Spanish manufacturer.

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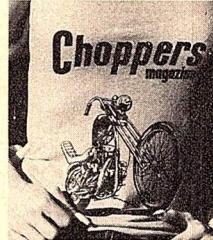
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ranked 125 privateer, will be riding a factory RC next year.

Pat Richter will be the sole MX Fox rider in America, but Geoff Fox is still looking at young 125 riders. In Europe, Moto-X Fox is considering the possibility of sponsoring Finland's Matti Autio for the 125 World Championship.

* * * *

THE LAST RESORT

When all the professional racers are on the West Coast, Yamaha privateers Scott and Mike Gillman get together with John Savitski and mechanic Bevo Forte to hold the world's largest front yard minicycle race. This year, after the Puyallup round of the Trans-AMA, the crowd gathered on the front lawn and proceeded to rip it to shreds. Hannah, Lackey, DiStefano, Glover, Savitski, Kessler and every big name in America were there. But so were the cops. The racing was detuned to coasting down the big hill with the engines off.

* * * *

OGDEN GETS SHAFT

Gary Ogden won the final Support class event of the 500 National Championship series, but as he crossed the finish line he stopped and gave his mechanic a ride under the checkered flag. For this act he was disqualified and all of his prize money was taken from him. Gary is a hard-riding and nice kid. He asked what rule he had broken and was informed that he had received "Outside Assistance."

Gary appealed this "Outside Assistance" disqualification, but rather than risk it to the AMA's impartial nature he had a lawyer prove that this rule did not apply. To all the motocross world it looked as though Ogden would win his appeal. Unfortunately, two things happened to Gary. He crashed and broke his leg, and the AMA ignored the initial contention of his appeal and upheld the disqualification on two *different* and separate rule violations that had never been mentioned to Gary at the time.

Ogden has become the victim of a "Fishing Expedition." It is like pulling a person off of the street and going



"Where did you get the funny hat, Brad?" — Jim Pomeroy.



Sometimes the best seat in the house is on the house.

through the law books until they find something he might have violated. The judge and jury of this recent AMA interpretation of the rules are again Mike DiPrete and Douglas Mockett, the Commissioner of Racing. We would like to see a clear-cut procedure developed for protests, appeals and decisions. We would also like to see the AMA officials be required to give the riders *due process* under the law, instead of a ticket on the Atchison, Topeka and the Santa Fe.

* * * *

MOTO MONEY

The big-time AMA pro racers get paid moto money. That means that if they win the first moto and DNF the second one they still get paid a share of the purse. Local promoters in Texas have been doing it for several years, and it really works well. Now there is some reason to hang around and ride the second moto after a breakdown.

The way it works is simple. Half of the purse is set aside for the overall winners, while a quarter is pocketed for each moto. Thus, if you have a \$100 pay-out to the winner, he gets \$25 for winning the first moto, \$25 for the second moto and \$50 for the overall. If the rider goes 2-3 to win the overall victory, he gets the \$50 overall money and the amount of moto money that corresponds to second and third-place finishes. Your local promoter should be paying the pros at your track this way. So get on his case.

* * * *

WINNERS WEAR

We have been making jokes about what kind of underwear to use with your leathers. The key is to get a comfortable fit and a shiny surface. Pantyhose are probably the ultimate setup, but no one is daring enough to try. Al Simon, the Gold Belt



There's always one in every group! As the lineman readied the group with a few passages from MOTOCROSS ACTION MAGAZINE, Thelma Sinclair simply didn't pay attention. Last reports say he was seen gassing-up at a service station somewhere in Somaliland.

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entrepreneur, has come out on the market with the perfect underwear. Winners is the brand name, and they are used by Roger DeCoster, Marty Smith, Jim Pomeroy, Tony DiStefano, Danny LaPorte and a host of others. Don't ask us how we know.

* * * *

500 USGP BACK ON

The USGP for 500cc bikes has been reinstated at Carlsbad. Earlier in the year the FIM pulled the race out of America, but have now decided that the United States deserves a 500 GP. 1978 will be the first year that America has had a 125, 250 and 500 Grand Prix. Mid-Ohio will get the 125 race, Unadilla will have the 250 and Carlsbad will remain the site of the 500.

* * * *

LIGHT BROWN FINES HANNAH \$10

At the Texas round of the Trans-AMA Referee Light Brown Lancione fined Bob Hannah \$10 for riding out to the first turn before the start of the race. Hannah accepted this heavy fine without complaint, but Light Brown later rescinded the fine because he had not made it clear during the riders' meeting that this was a no-no. Light Brown has been out of the AMA so long, since becoming the motocross

manager several years ago, that he didn't know that standard AMA procedure is to never admit a mistake. A kudo to Light Brown.

* * * *

THE FULL HOUSE AWARD

The Full House Manufacturers Award for motocross excellence is awarded to the manufacturer that places the most riders in the top positions during the three National Championship classes. Last year Suzuki received the award, and at the end of the year will be required to turn the large trophy over to Honda for 1978.

EIERSTEDT T-SHIRTS

To all of you people out there who think it would be really neat to sell T-shirts or posters with your favorite star emblazoned on the front, you had better not. Before a company can use a person's image on a product they must get his approval. The latest happening is a Rich Eierstedt T-shirt. Rich likes the idea of having a T-shirt with his flying form on it, but would prefer to be consulted about the matter ahead of time. So those of you in the T-shirt business, consult your local star ahead of time, or he may consult his local attorney. And he will have a great case. III



Preston Petty's No-Dive suspension started to appear during the Trans-AMA series, first on Brad Lackey's Honda and then on Broc Glover's Support class Yamaha. Mechanic Jim Felt goes into shock when Broc gets the bike dirty.

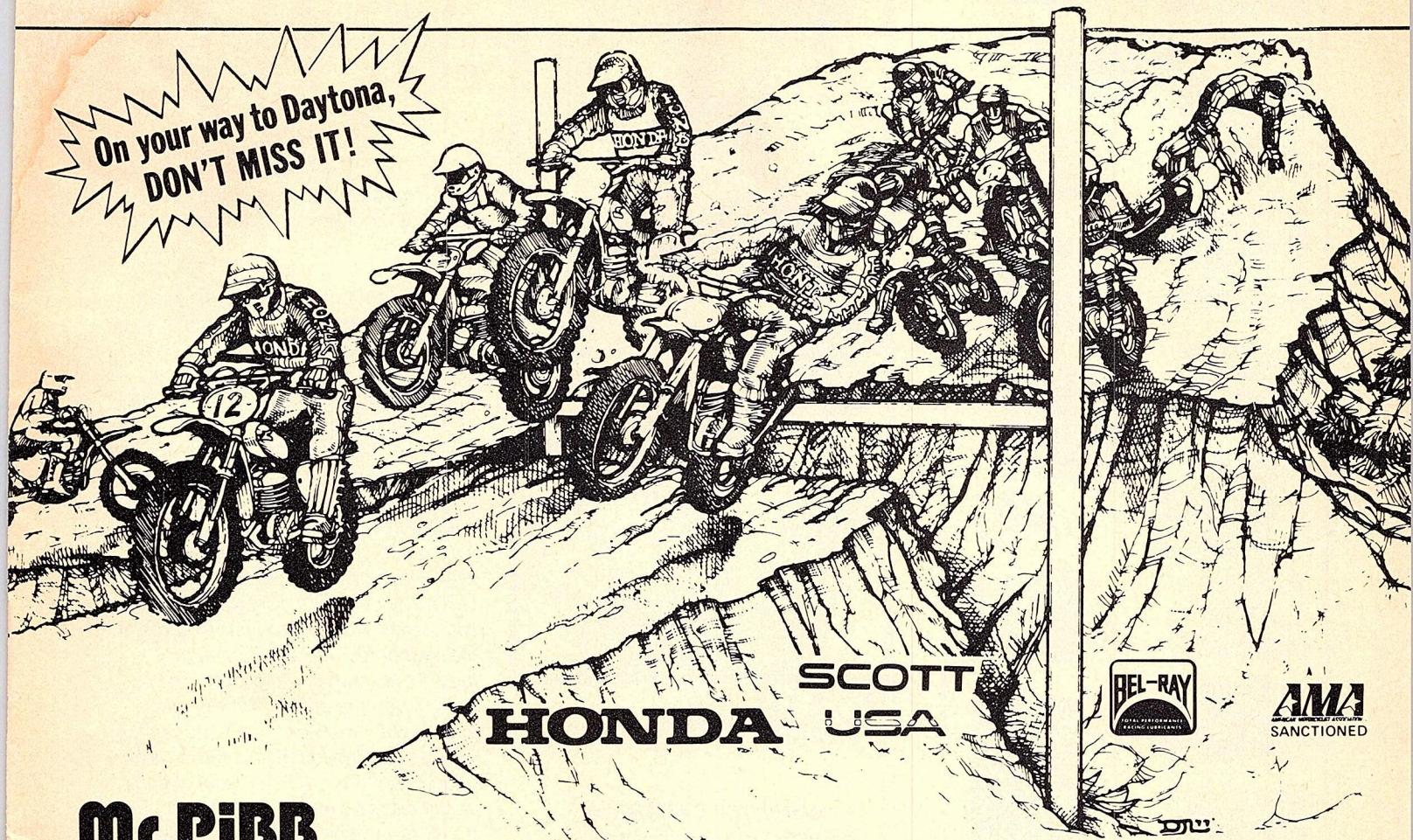


"Where did you get the funny hat, Keith?" — Bob Hannah.



Life on the road to motocross stardom isn't paved with gold. And quite often it is plain old cold, as this rider finds out in Buchanan, Michigan, at the Trans-AMA.

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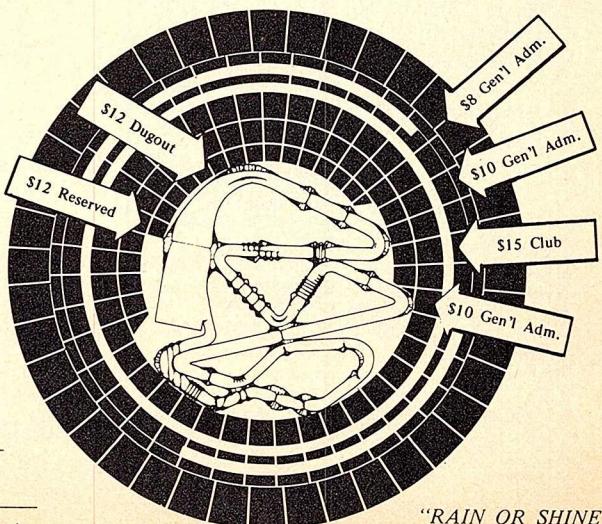
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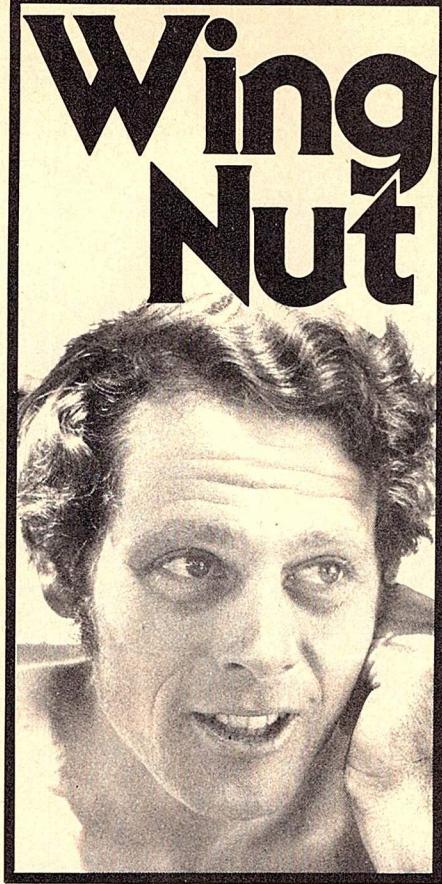
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By Al Baker

CONQUER CARABELA

I would like to know how well Carabelas would compete against RM's and YZ's (100cc, 125cc). I was thinking of buying one (Carabela) and racing at the local track. Most of the bikes in the 100 class are RM's, and a few YZ's. The 125 class has RM's, YZ's and Elsies (a lot of all three).

I'd like to blow my friends off the track. I like Carabelas, but I don't know how good they are.

Dave Martin
Kirkwood, New York

P.S. I think your mag is the best.

After 13 years of racing and swapping mounts, I suggest applying my quoted fact to yourself — "Race what's winning." If the majority of competitors at your track are on RM's, take a hint.

PREPPING THE KX450

I have been in the Army for the past seven years, and due to many causes, have been away from riding almost that long. Presently, I am going to attempt to return to the sport of motocross, my first love. I am 25 years old, 6'3" and weigh 230 pounds. I am riding a 1975

KX450, bought used. I believe it to be a good bike for me during my retraining and shaping up. My question is, will it be competitive with newer bikes I'll come up against? Keeping in mind costs and effort of modifications, would I be better off buying a new bike?

Carl. R. (better late than never)
Richmond, Jr.
New York

P.S. Years ago I rode a 250 Pursang, but now I feel better on an open class bike.

By the sound of your build, you should be classified as an open class rider. I'll agree that the KX450 will be adequate for training and practice, mainly because its power is a handful and its suspension is stiff as a board. New open class motocross bikes are in the neighborhood of \$1500. The resale of your KX450 is in the neighborhood of \$500. First, let your pocketbook be your guide. Your KX can be updated with a pair of Tough Terrain Control (TTC) Forks, which cost \$220 complete with crowns, axle and stem. I'd replace the swingarm with an aluminum long-travel model, which costs \$145. Also, swap the shocks for the latest long-travel S&W Freon models, which cost \$110. Providing your motor is in good condition, I believe your mount would be race-ready with 9 1/2 inches of travel front and rear.

NOTHING'S THE BEST

I am stuck between a YZ and RM100. According to your May issue, the RM is the best, but it needs shocks and forks. Completely stock, which is the best?

Joe Bonitch
Miller Place, New York

Of all the small Japanese bikes we've tested, you've got to put shocks and forks on all of them. Both the Yamaha and the Suzuki are equally as good otherwise. My decision would depend upon which dealer is closer to your home, which is giving you a better price, and which has a good reputation for service.

DEALER INQUIRY

Even though we sell Suzukis, I need help getting our RM's manageable. Fred Ogden, who teaches the technical schools for U.S. Suzuki, told me to

Continued on page 68

TAKE A DEEP BREATH.

NOW THANK A TREE.

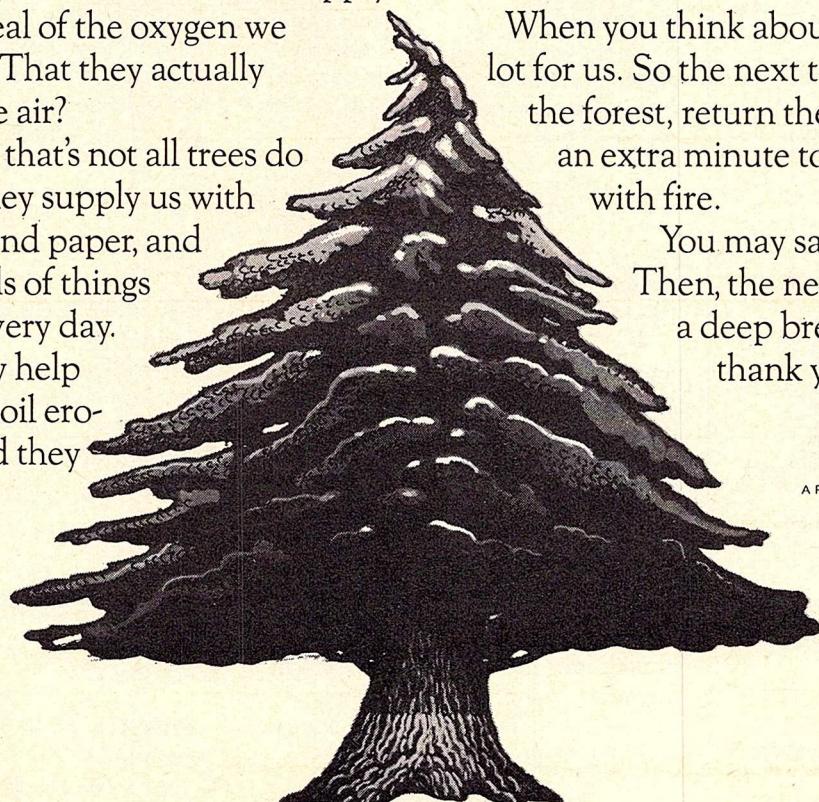
Did you know that trees supply a great deal of the oxygen we breathe? That they actually purify the air?

And that's not all trees do for us. They supply us with lumber, and paper, and thousands of things we use every day.

They help prevent soil erosion. And they provide

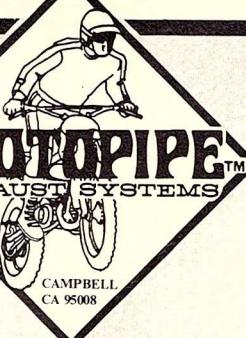
shelter for our animal friends. When you think about it, trees do a lot for us. So the next time you're in the forest, return the favor. Take an extra minute to be careful with fire.

You may save a tree's life. Then, the next time it takes a deep breath, it can thank you.

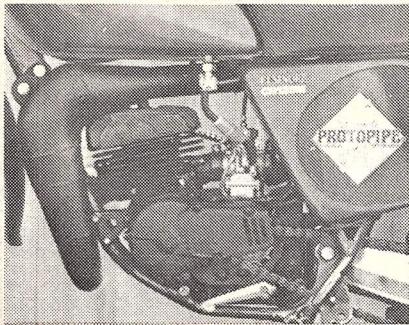


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Mail Entries

SUSPENSION TRICK

Dear MXA:

In your November issue with (stadium ace) Jimmy Ellis on the cover, well, the front tire looks a bit low. Could this be a factory trick in suspension? Anyway, I was wondering how many bills a factory Can-Am 250 MX-4 would run?

Tim Donahue
Fairview Hts., Illinois

(A few too many bills, we think.)

LUKEWARM TIP

Dear MXA:

Being a normal person(?), I do not like to have my shiny new swingarm cut in half by a cheap, greasy chain. Encountering this problem with my Honda XL125, I devised a cheap guard for the axle part of my swingarm. All you need is an old grip off your old bomb, two tie-wraps and two hands. Cut the end of the grip off at about two inches. Slit one side so that it will fit on the swingarm. Wrap a tie-wrap around each end and pull tight. It's not the best guard in the world, but it's better than having your swingarm mauled by a vicious chain!

Charlie Ratteree
Stump Mountain, Georgia

GOOD IDEA, BUT WHAT IS IT?

Dear MXA:

Are you sick and tired of carrying a toolbox that probably weighs more than a 390 Husky? Well, that old wizard of technology (namely me) has come up with an outrageously super little device which I have aptly titled "Follow Me Everywhere." This is one of those brilliant ideas born in this scientific brain of mine. All you need are a few carpenter's tools, some wooden boards, four caster wheels and plenty of patience. If you don't have the last ingredient listed, forget the whole thing, Daddy. Take the money and go see Star Wars.

Mike Gagnon
Elsinore, California

(What kind of money are we talking about, Mike?)

SOMETHING DIFFERENT

Dear MXA:

I have an RM125 and I race it. If you've ever raced, you know what I mean, you know you like to make everybody else think you really have a tricked-out bike or something really different. Well, I'm trying to come up with some new ideas, but I'm running out quick, so if you have any ideas please drop me a line.

Dave Brust
Middle Grove, New York

(We know what you mean, Dave, you sort of lose your identity when you line up with 30 other yellow 125s, so we painted ours blue so we're set unless the factory decides on a blue paint scheme for next year.)

TEACHER'S PET

Dear MXA:

Needless to say, my stock rose considerably with my students when they discovered my subscription to your magazine. They decided I had the inside line with you! Our school is located in the N.J. Pine Barrens, so it is ideally suited for bikes of all kinds — behind the school, that is.

Mrs. Zita C. Hornidge
Central Regional High
Bayville, New Jersey

STUDENT'S DILEMMA

Dear MXA:

Would you please send me some brochures about motorcycle motocross? This is an assignment for English.

Brad Barlow
Dixon, Illinois

(You don't really think we're going to do your homework for you, do you Brad?)

PRIVATE TEARS

Dear MXA:

As I was reading your November issue I saw a mistake about the Canadian GP. Mike McIntosh took a sixth and beat Jimmy Martin and Mike

Continued on page 67

COUGH UP THE VOTES!

1978 RIDER OF THE YEAR AWARD

With enough friends it could be you.

Who will it be in 1978? In 1975 it was Roger DeCoster. In 1976 it was Marty Smith. Last year the winner was Bob Hannah. Next year it could be one of virtually thousands of motocrossers. It could even be you (if you stuff the ballot box), only one vote per letter. There are no restrictions. The choices are endless with talent like Brad Lackey, Jim Pomeroy, Heikki Mikkola, Gerrit Wolsink, Tony DiStefano, Graham Noyce, Jimmy Ellis, Gaston Rahier, Jimmy Weinert, Gary Semics, Rick Burgett, Marty Tripes, Kent Howerton, Mike Bell, Danny LaPorte, Broc Glover, Rex Staten, Steve Stackable, Pierre Karsmakers, Rich Eierstedt, Tommy Croft, Gaylon Mosier and many others. You tell us!

WHO EVER WINS

DEPENDS ON YOUR VOTE

You decide! The contest is open to all the readers of MOTOCROSS ACTION, and those who just look at the pictures. The winner will carry the title of RIDER OF THE YEAR. Just fill in the handy ballot provided for you and wait to see if your choice is going to drive away with the fully equipped off-road Toyota SR-5 Long Bed pickup truck, ROY plaque and undying fame. All votes must be in by March 1, 1978.



MX6-2

MOTOCROSS
ACTION MAGAZINE

RIDER OF THE YEAR BALLOT

Fill in the name of your choice for the
MOTOCROSS ACTION RIDER OF THE YEAR
and mail it to:

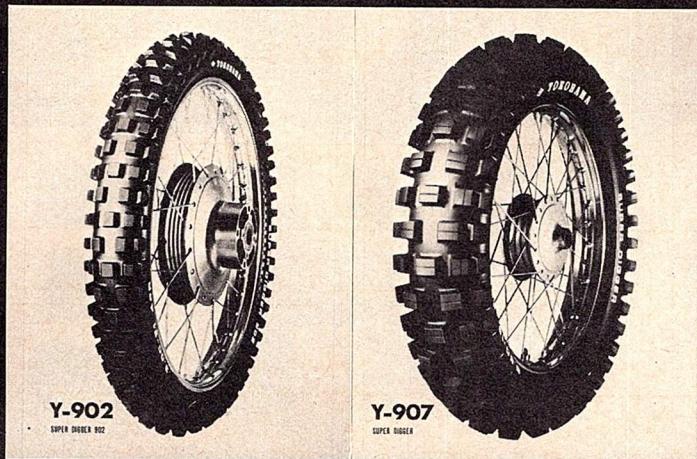
MOTOCROSS ACTION Magazine
RIDER OF THE YEAR
P.O. Box 317
Encino, California 91316

*I, being a bonafide motocross fan and
faithful reader of the magazine,
hereby cast my vote for*

*to be Motocross Action's
RIDER OF THE YEAR
and get the truck.*

In what state do you live? _____

Tricks From The Trade



HERE'S MUD IN YOUR EYE

A healthy roost is assured with Yokohama's new Super Digger knobs. Developed by five-time World Champ Roger DeCoster, the Super Digger front tire is the Y-902, a 3.00 by 21-inch tire. It is a new, hard-surface tire. It features a cantilevered rim protector, and is designed to absorb shock and maintain tire contact. The

rear knob is the new Y-907, also with cantilevered rim protection, increased section height and larger knobs. Available in all the popular sizes including a six-ply tire. For more information contact Yokohama Tire, 1530 Church Rd., Dept. MXA, Montebello, California 90640; (213) 723-9691.



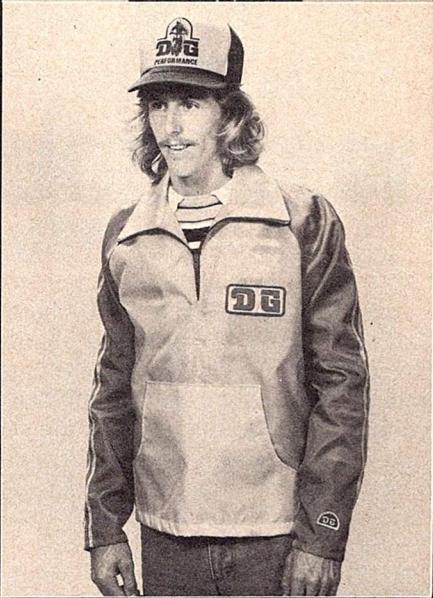
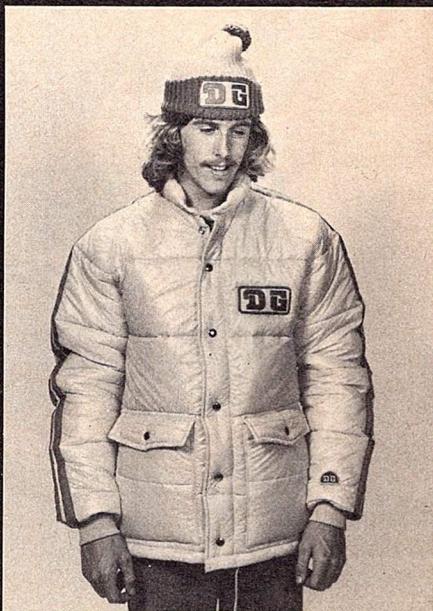
ONLY \$67.95

These all-nylon MX pants are the same as those Jimmy Weinert wore in the Superbowl. Designed to be super-light, cool and comfortable—and best of all, inexpensive—they come in: blue with yellow stripe, yellow with black stripe, red front, black back, and yellow stripe. These units are available from Malcolm Smith, Gold Medal Racing Products, 888 Marlborough, Dept. MXA, Riverside, California 92507; (714) 686-1006.



BLOW OUT

If you are too lazy to fix that flat tire, then a tire sealant could be the answer to your slothful ways. Sealguard is a tire sealant available in eight-ounce, 16-ounce, one- and five-gallon sizes. It claims to seal tire punctures as fast as they may occur. Once is enough for us. Additionally, Sealguard claims to have no effect on tire pressures and helps the tire run cooler. They also guarantee it. An eight-ounce bottle retails for \$2.49. Sealguard is available from Cycle Products West, Dept. MXA, 11900 W. Pico Blvd., Los Angeles, California 90064. Dealer and distributor prices are available on request.



HANNAH WEAR

Bullet Bob Hannah knows the importance of looking good off the track as well as on. Here Bob models the new DG Racing Apparel line of clothing. Whether Bob is wearing the "Hurricane" winter jacket (\$39.95) with matching DG knit cap (\$4.50) or the pullover windbreaker (\$19.50) and DG hat (\$4.50), he knows he'll be looking good for all the luscious Louellas out there. As always, DG Racing Apparel is available from finer motorcycle and accessory stores everywhere. For information and dealers, contact DG Performance Specialties, 1170 Van Horne Road, Anaheim, California 92806; (714) 630-5471.



BOBBY SOXER

Hang-Ten off-road competition riding socks are now available from Keeper Industries. Extra-tall with heavy-duty ribbing, the socks are easily rolled over the tops of your riding boots. Bulky terry cloth construction to resist dreaded sock odor is used. These socks are sanitized and sanitary and are machine-washable and dryable. Available in two sizes, 8 to 11 and 10 to 14, and five colors, gold, lime, orange, red and royal blue. Suggested list price is \$5.99. For more info contact: Keeper Industries, Dept. MXA, 6415 De Soto Ave., Woodland Hills, California 91367; (213) 884-5800.



SPRING IT

The niftiest thing about these spring kits is the handy little tool they include for pulling and installing exhaust springs. Just hook it on to the spring end and pull. No danger of it slipping and launching you over the bars like when you use pliers. The springs themselves are vibration- and stress-resistant and are made of high-tensile spring-steel fasteners. They come in either a short or long spring length and are available from Torque Products, 895 West Mill Street, Dept. MXA, San Bernardino, California 92410.



THOR'S ARM

Rich Thorwaldson is now offering an all-aluminum rear swingarm for the Yamaha YZ125s, 250s and 400s. The arms are 34mm longer than the standard swingarms and are two pounds lighter. If you'd like to update

your Yam to E status, then Thor's arm should do the trick. All parts are guaranteed. For more information contact Thor Racing Fab. Inc., 6905 Oslo Cir. E, Dept. MXA, Buena Park, California 90620; (714) 522-4571.



TOOLING AROUND

This handy little tool assortment would be a welcome addition to any toolbox. Measuring only four by six inches, the kit contains two regular and two Phillips-head screwdrivers, a hole punch, five Allen wrenches and eight socket wrenches with drive. It comes with a patented pistol grip that allows one-hand operation. Available in both

inch and metric sizes (specify), it comes packaged in a zoot zippered pouch. At \$9.98 plus postage and handling it makes an inexpensive addition to your tool collection. For further information contact IPS Products, 5118 Rolling Hills Court, Dept. MXA, Tampa, Florida 33617; (813) 988-6561.

II

MAINTENANCE SIMPLE SUPPORT SANITA- TION

Prepping a Trans-AMA traveler

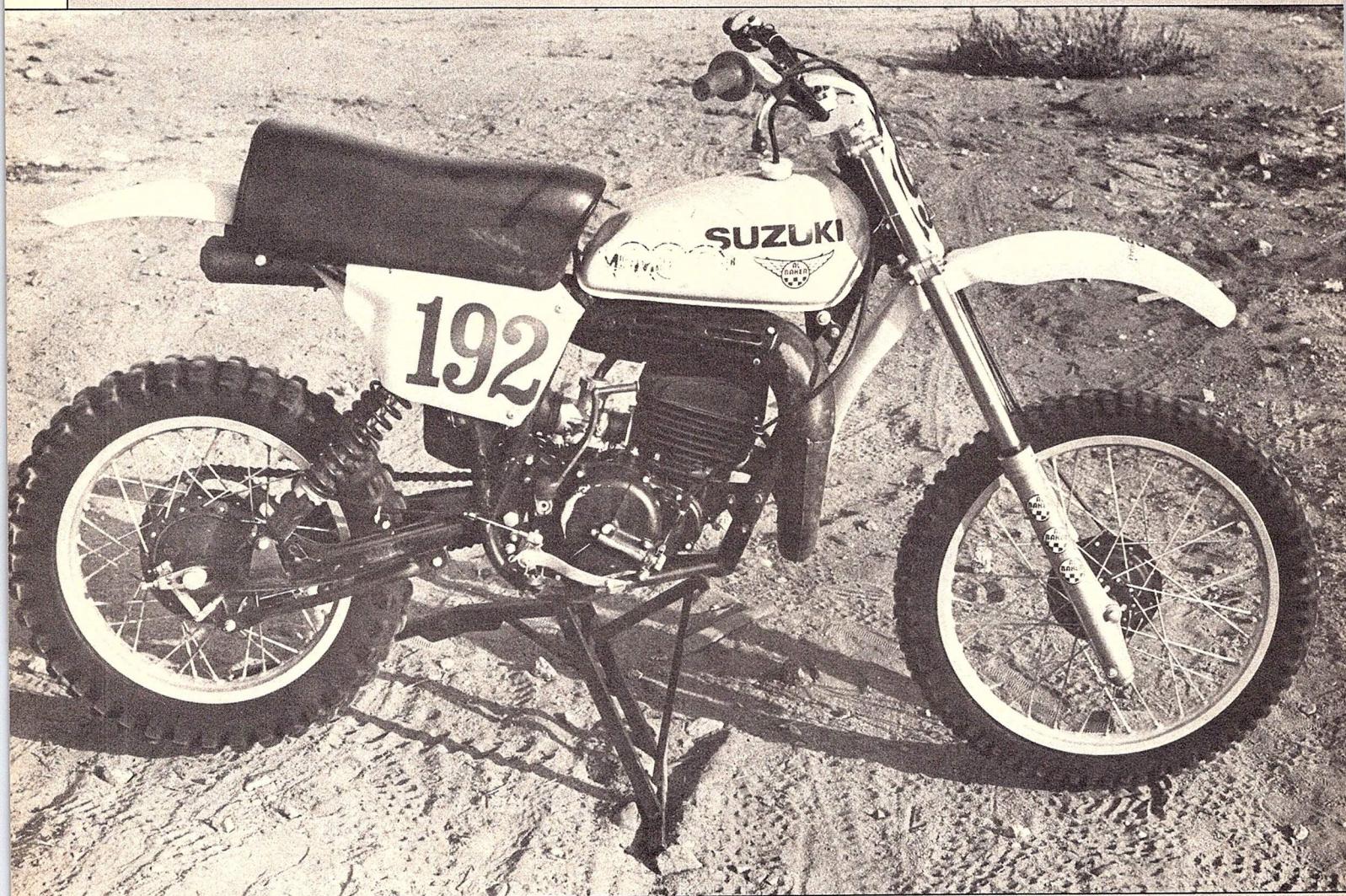
By Jody Weisel

□ To make it to the big-time you have to climb the ladder. One of motocross society's most important rungs in the ladder to success is the Trans-AMA Support class. Racing the Support class requires skill, daring, and a reliable 250. Everyone wants to have the trickiest bike on the track, the neatest decal, the fanciest paint job or the longest-travel forks. But what everyone really needs is a strong, durable motor, careful prep, and some simple sanitation.

The MOTOCROSS ACTION RM250C is a classic example of carefully prepared Support class equipment. It is not a test bed for untried products, but rather the culmination of an organized approach to racing. The detailing and sanitary modifications can be done to any modern MXer regardless of brand or country of origin.

FENDERS: The stock RM front fender is not wide enough for the eight weeks of mud and goop that the wintertime Trans-AMA troops through. Preston Petty Products markets a Tony D. replica fender that retails for \$9 and is considerably wider. PP can match the Suzuki yellow, or you can choose a glaring white like we did. Available at your local dealers everywhere.

SIDE PANELS: We replaced the stock Suzuki sidepanels with natural plastic sidepanels from Al Baker R&D. If we had only done it to improve looks, that would have been a good enough reason, but it was also a functional move.

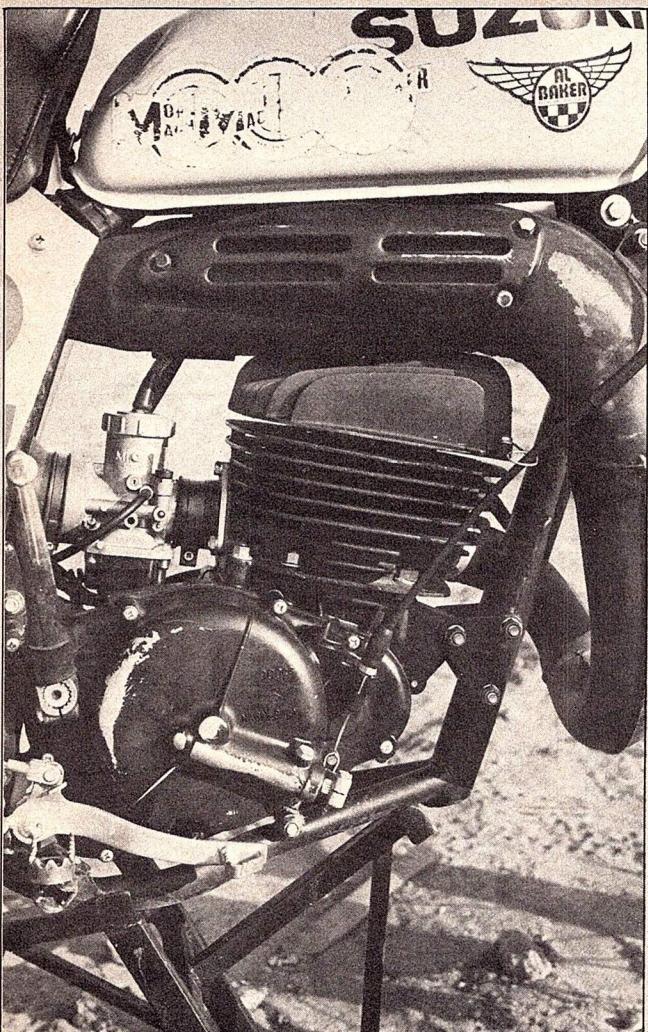


There are two ways to go with your RM, YZ, CR or KX. Run it dead stock or follow an organized program of sano modification. This is an example of simple sanitation.

Racing with the AMA means racing with a three-digit number (unless you are rated in the top 99), and the Suzuki sidepanels require a magician to put neat numbers on the bulging panels. The Al Baker panels are neat, flat and smooth. The numbers can be renewed without an apprentice sorcery license. Available from Al Baker R&D, P.O. Box 1492, Apple Valley, California 92307, for \$10 apiece.

NUMBER PLATE: The front number plate comes from CH Performance Products at 7633 Winnetka, Canoga Park, California. These number plates are perhaps the fastest-selling items on the west coast. The number plate has an integral cable guard that keeps the brake cable from hooking on the handlebar clamps and causing a nasty fall. At \$5, it is a simple and appealing modification. It mounts with nylon ties, which are much stronger than the chintzy Suzuki rubber bands.

PIPE: The pipe is a stock RM250C pipe. The only modification to the pipe is a heat shield welded to the front cones. The heat shield is off of a Suzuki RM80 minibike. The heat shield keeps your leg off the pipe in long right-handers. It also cuts down on R&R on the pipe because it doesn't become necessary to paint it every week. Available from your friendly, local, neighborhood Suzuki dealer.

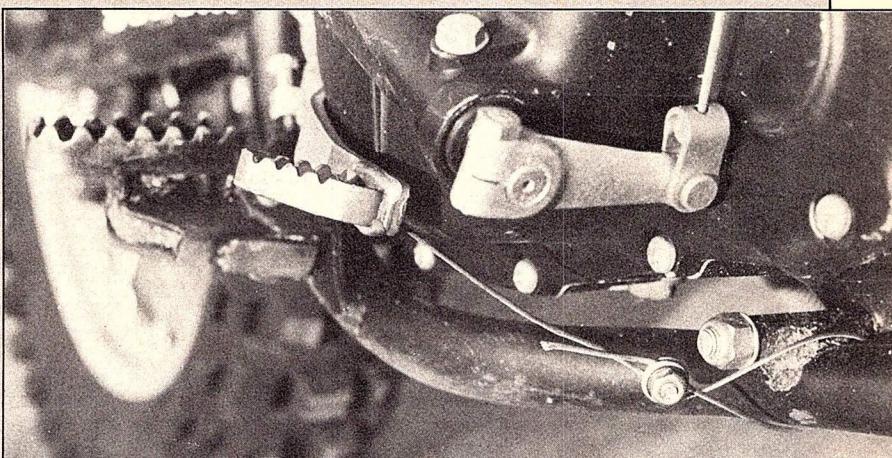


The heat shield looks like a production part, which it is. Production for a minicycle.

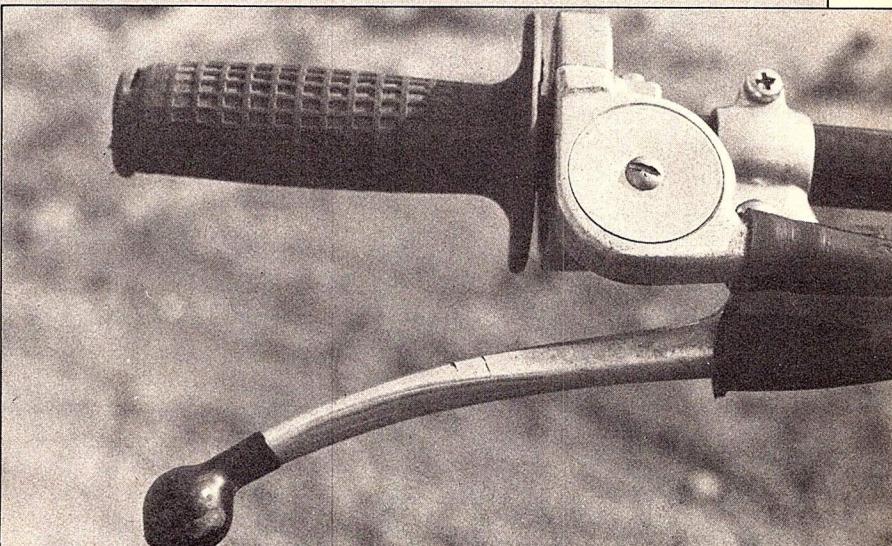
SEAT: Eight weeks of hard riding take a toll on your legs and buttocks, so we added a DG Performance Specialties seat kit. We didn't use the foam supplied with the kit, but went to an upholstery shop and had the seat stapled up using an extremely dense foam. The increased height makes it easier to stand up and cushions the blows that the suspension misses. It also makes the bike taller than the normal person's legs. Available for \$20 from DG, 1170 Van Horne, Anaheim, California 92806.

HANDLEBARS: The handlebars are Gary Jones replica bars. They have a special V-shaped cross-brace that gives your face an extra inch or two of travel before coming into harm's way. The Jones bars are extremely strong and may make the difference between finishing a moto after a crash or holding onto a set of pretzels in the pits. Available from local dealers everywhere.

HANDLEBAR CLAMPS: Grand Prix Specialties makes these machined aluminum bar-backs from solid billet. They are stronger than the stock triple clamps. This nifty accessory allows you to move the bars back an inch and a half for better control. They also make it possible to raise and lower the fork legs, remove the springs, change the oil and adjust the air without removing the bars like on stock Suzukis. Available from Grand Prix Specialties, 11476 Oxnard, North Hollywood, California, for \$19.95.



An old throttle cable and a bolt could eliminate a DNF.



The new Preston Petty barrel grip is overshadowed by the hottest throttle on the market — Gunnar's Gasser.

SIMPLE SUPPORT SANITATION

TIRES: Tires are one of the biggest expenses of traveling racers. It normally means Metzlers for hard tracks and Trelleborgs for soft courses, but that can run into a bundle of bucks. Perhaps the best dual-purpose tire is IRC. We use the 5.10 x 18 on the rear. It works excellently in traction situations and better than most in pavement-type dirt. The price isn't anywhere as heavy as the exotic brands and it is available everywhere.

BRAKE PEDAL: With the current trend toward ten-inch-travel suspenders, the rear brake pedal really takes a beating. Often the brake pedal is bent backwards around the footpeg, especially in rutted or deeply grooved tracks. We took an old throttle cable and ran it through a hole drilled in the pedal. The old soldered-on clip keeps it attached to the pedal, while the other end is bolted to the frame. This keeps the brake pedal from being pulled back. Available in your local junk box or garbage can.

HANDGRIPS: Handgrips are a matter of personal taste, and everybody's taste is different, but we selected Preston Petty's new barrel grip. It is an extremely soft rubber grip with slightly deeper grooves than other models on the market. It is not hexed or angled in any way. It is available in all of the famous PP colors.

AIR FILTER: Most Japanese air filters are junk. They leak air and dirt. If you are going to be racing in mud, muck, dust and cold you need the best filter you can get. We at MXA use JT Racing's Phase 2 dual-layered foam

filters exclusively. So do most of the factory race teams. Available from JT Racing, Box 10, Bonita, California 92002, for \$12.05.

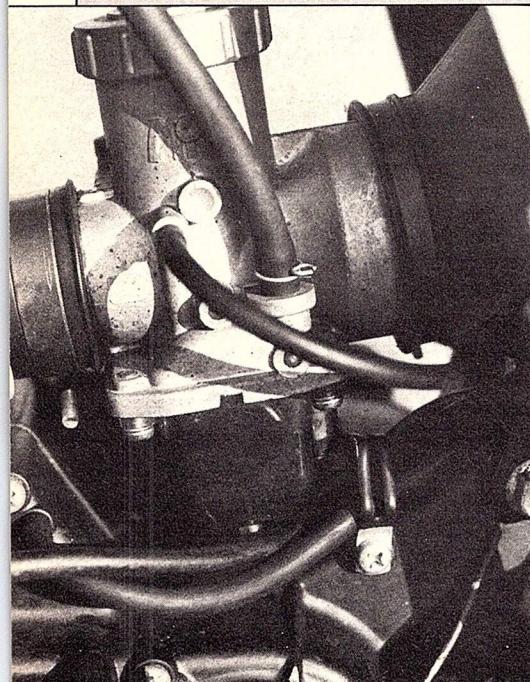
SUSPENSION: The suspension is by Al Baker R&D and tops out at ten inches front and back. More info on the suspension mods is available in the November issue of MXA. Total cost of the suspension improvement was \$160, and it works. Available from Al Baker, P.O. Box 1492, Apple Valley, California; (714) 247-2621.

BIKE STAND: The High Point bike stand offers all the advantages of a factory workbench or Mark Charles stand with half the hassles. The High Point stand gets both wheels off the ground so that everything can be checked at once. All that is needed is level ground and a strong arm. The High Point stand is available from all High Point dealers and at many other locations around the country.

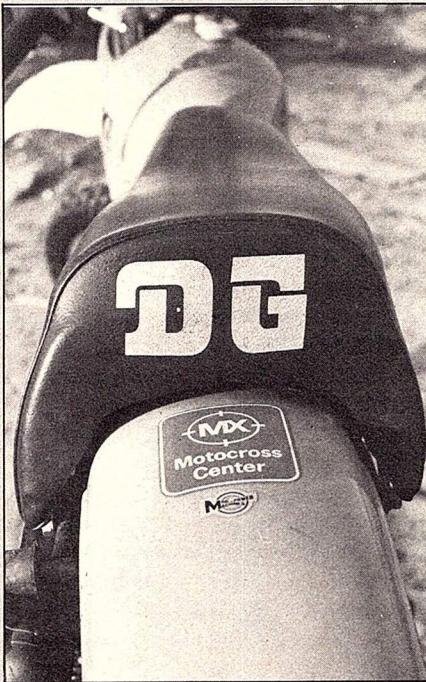
FLOAT BOWL: Our RM250C is equipped with a Tab clear float bowl. This float bowl is made in Colorado from the highest-quality plastic, and allows us to check whether or not gas is getting through to the carb or if dirt has gotten into the tank. Thanks to an easy snap-fit, the main jet can be changed in half the time it used to take. The Tab clear float bowl is available for most makes of MX bikes from Tab Products, 10575 East Lliff, Denver, Colorado.

CHAIN TENSIONER: The stock Suzuki C-model chain tensioner works very well, but the rubber roller doesn't last very long. After we split the third one into smithereens we got a Rowe chain tensioner roller, with ball bearings, and mounted it in place of the Suzuki rubber roller. With the Rowe roller we can get many, many more racing miles without having to worry about throwing a chain. Available at local dealers everywhere.

THROTTLE: The stock Suzuki throttle assembly works OK, but is susceptible to kinked cables after crashes. We replaced it with a Gunnar Gasser. The Gasser is a smooth-operating throttle that has the throttle cable exiting at a safe and protected angle. The cable cannot be ripped out or off in a crash. This is the best throttle made. **III**



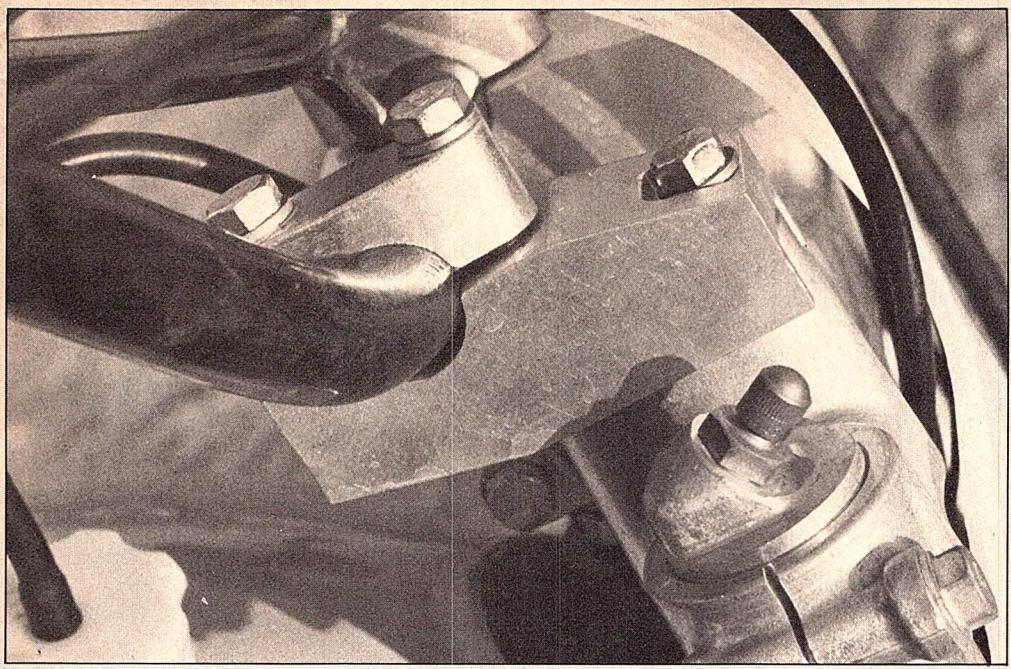
The Tab clear float bowl is available for all Yamaha and Suzuki motocrossers for \$9.95.



Short people need not apply. The DG seat kit pumps the seat up an additional 1 1/2 inches.



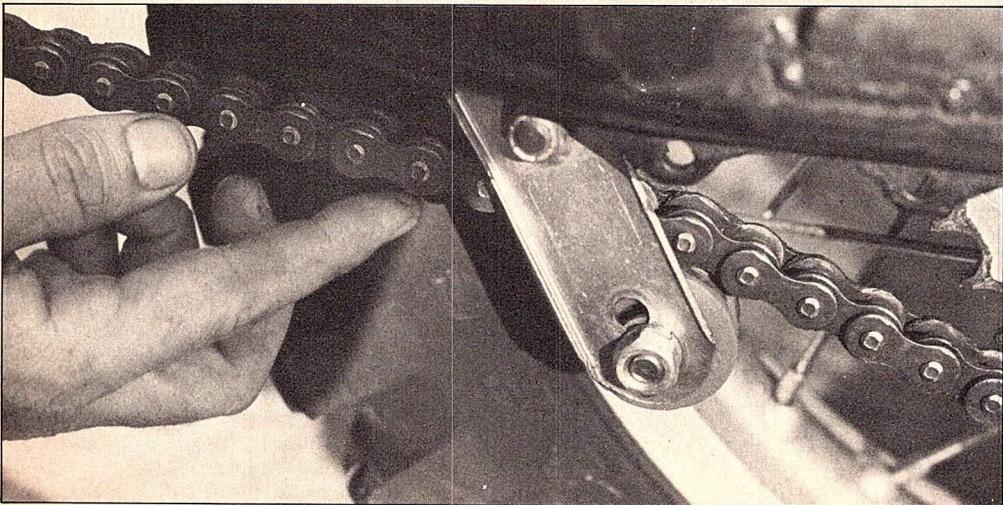
Up in Oregon a man dreamed of a fender for the masses. The PP ultra-wide unit was a vision come true for \$9.



These GPS bar-backs are stronger than the stock triple clamps, and allow the forks to slide up and down.



Natural plastic sidepanels end the misery of trying to fit a three-digit number over, under and around the stock bulges.



The stock Suzuki chain roller was replaced with a ball-bearing-guided Rowe roller. It lasts three times as long.

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Wiseco 1978 Hi-Performance Motorcycle Piston Brochure No.C-11

Get your FREE brochure — loaded with information on Wiseco 2-stroke and 4-stroke pistons, engine related tools, and clothing. And, we'll send you a FREE decal.

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Wiseco Piston, Inc.
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Wiseco, please send me 1978 brochure and decal. (I enclose 50¢ to cover cost of postage and handling)

PRO

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MOTORCYCLE
MECHANIC

A cartoon illustration of a person wearing a cap and apron, working on assembling a motorcycle wheel with spokes and a hub.

This future Pro is learning to assemble a wheel from rim, spokes and hub in 15 minutes. This is part of his training in AMI's Wheel Lab, learning modern techniques of resoling, lacing, truing, balancing and tire changing. Every Pro who graduates from AMI spends many hours in this and other Diagnostic and Testing Labs as part of the 450 hours of intensive training required to earn his certificate. The 12 week Residence Course is approved for veterans. Home Study Courses are also available. To learn more about this career opportunity send in the coupon or call:

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Florida residents call 1-904-255-0295 collect.



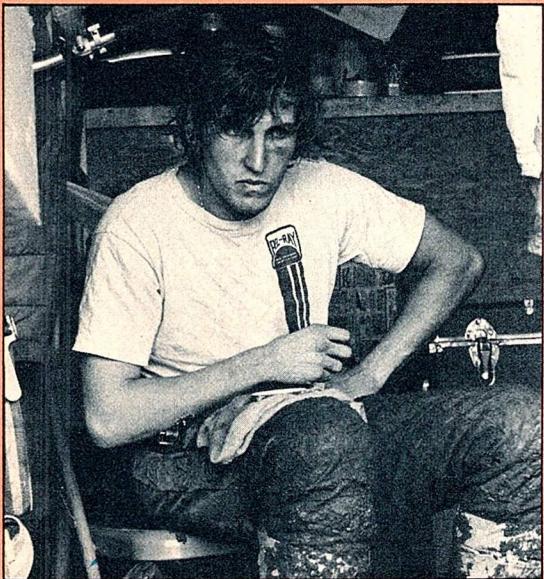
**AMERICAN
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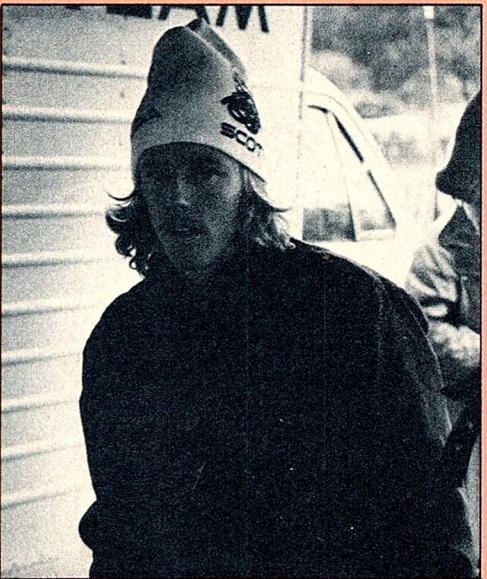
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STATE _____ ZIP _____
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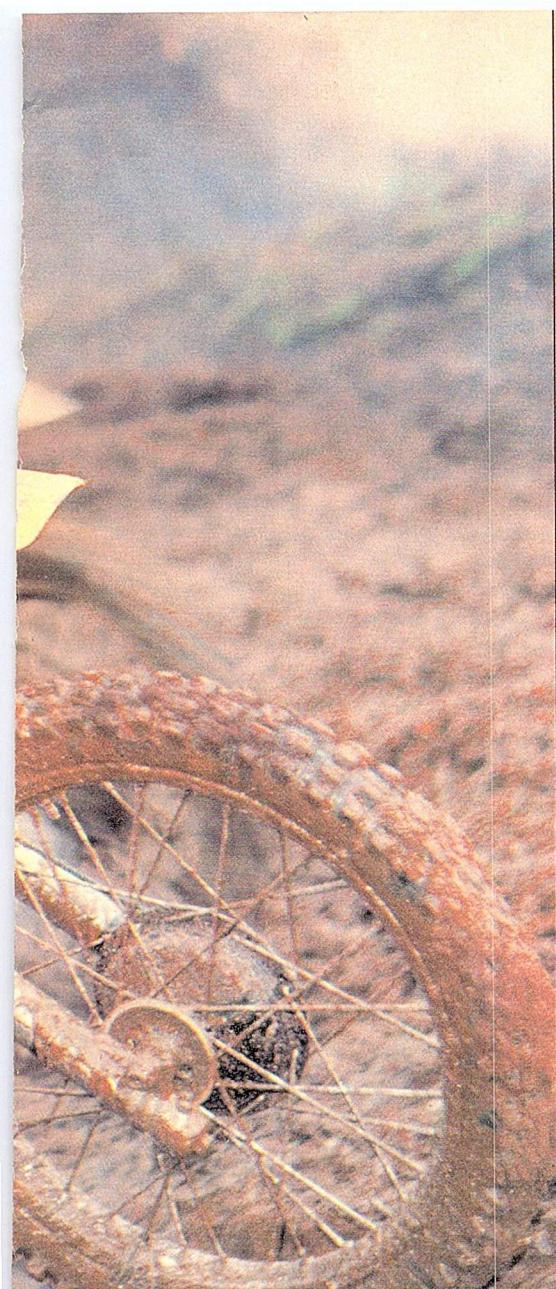
A bad leg and some dismal days sent Gerrit Wolsink home early.



There were only two ways to go with Bob Hannah: breakdowns or wins.



Jim Pomeroy and Brad Lackey helped Team Honda look fast on the track and funny in the pits.



1977 TRANS-AMA DECOSTER'S LAST TRANS- AMA?

Nine out of the top ten
for America

By Jody Weisel and Jim Gianatsis

□ The European-American Trans-AMA is more of an ethnocentric (national pride) test than a major racing series. And because it finds its drive, initiative and thrust from intercontinental rivalry, it is dependent on worthy adversaries. In its glamorous past, the young American moto-fans lined the fences to watch the iron men of Europe, from Hallman to Robert, decimate the fuzzy-faced kids from the U.S.A. While the teenage fans rooted for the hometown miracle, they marveled at the European dominance. But those days are gone, and with them the Trans-AMA must enter a new stage.

Roger DeCoster provided the veteran Trans-AMA spectator with what he secretly craved. DeCoster beat the American motocrossers hands-down over the eight-race 1977 series. And masochistically, the crowds pressed up against picket fences rooting for the American stars to blow the invading Belgian off the track, but whenever Roger fell behind they rooted even harder for him to catch up.

The Trans-AMA series is rushing toward a climactic confrontation. Next year the Americans are going to win the Trans-AMA. It is an inevitable fact of all these years of intense international competition. Sooner or

later we will have to win. Without a rider of the caliber of DeCoster to use his experience and cunning, the faster and younger Americans will dominate. Two possible outcomes might arise in next year's Trans-AMA. First, no Europeans at all will venture across the pond to have their socks unraveled by the space-age American motocrossers. Without Europeans, the Trans-AMA will shrivel and die. Secondly, the young Europeans now replacing the aging superstars of the Grand Prix circuit will push their factories for a chance to race year-round. If the young Europeans come over, the Trans-AMA will have gone full circle. Once the sole romping ground of the Europeans who shoved the Americans so far back in the pack we had to invent a "First American" award — and even it went to a transplanted European, the Trans-AMA will now become an all-American show. Anyone want to be the first to donate the "First European" award?

1977 belonged once more to the man from Belgium. Roger DeCoster shouldn't be considered part of the European team. He is beyond a classification that limits him to one continent. DeCoster is the universal man.



Roger DeCoster, The Man, slogged through eight weeks of mud, dust and kids 12 years younger than himself to dominate for the third straight year.

1977 TRANS-AMA

OHIO

Mid-Ohio Moto Park,
Lexington, Ohio

The opening round of the 1977 Trans-AMA fell to the all-powerful Mr. DeCoster, but not without a few tense moments as Marty Smith and Bob Hannah made him work. Hannah cruised to an almost effortless first-moto win with Marty Smith bringing the impressive Honda RC400 into second. Roger could do no better than third in the first moto.

With the second moto all primed for an American victory, Hannah and Smith started another runaway, but it was to be in vain for both. Mighty Marty spit his chain at the 20-minute mark and lost six places trying to get it back on. Hannah was still setting a steaming pace out front until his chain derailed also. Bob wasn't as lucky as Marty and the Yamaha OW chain came adrift again, forcing him back to 17th place. Roger's luck was flawless as he rode past both former 125 champs to garner a 3-1 victory. Smith was second with a 2-5, and he

was followed in by Honda teammates Pomeroy and Lackey, giving the red machines three out of the top five places.

Maico Grand Prix campaigner Herbert Schmitz and Suzuki's Gerrit Wolsink traded DNFs and tenth-place finishes for 18th and 17th respectively. Japan's Kojii Masuda was 20th after a crash-induced DNF. Top privateer was Moto-X Fox's Steve Wise.

OHIO TRANS-AMA RESULTS

1. Roger DeCoster 3-1 (Suz); 2. Marty Smith 2-5 (Hon); 3. Jim Pomeroy 6-2 (Hon); 4. Brad Lackey 5-4 (Hon); 5. Gaylon Mosier 8-3 (Mai); 6. Bob Hannah 1-17 (Yam); 7. Tommy Croft 7-7 (Hon); 8. Tony DiStefano 4-12 (Suz); 9. Marty Trippes 12-8 (H-D); 10. Kent Howerton 11-10 (Hus); 11. Danny LaPorte 17-6 (Suz); 12. Steve Stackable 9-14 (Mai); 13. Jimmy Ellis 14-11 (C-A); 14. Gary Semics 18-9 (Kaw); 15. Steve Wise 13-16 (Suz); 16. Rex Staten 15-15 (H-D); 17. Gerrit Wolsink 10-DNF (Suz); 18. Herbert Schmitz DNF-10 (Mai); 19. Mickey Kessler 19-18 (Mon); 20. Kojii Masuda 16-DNF (Suz).

VIRGINIA

Lake Sugar Tree, Axton, Virginia

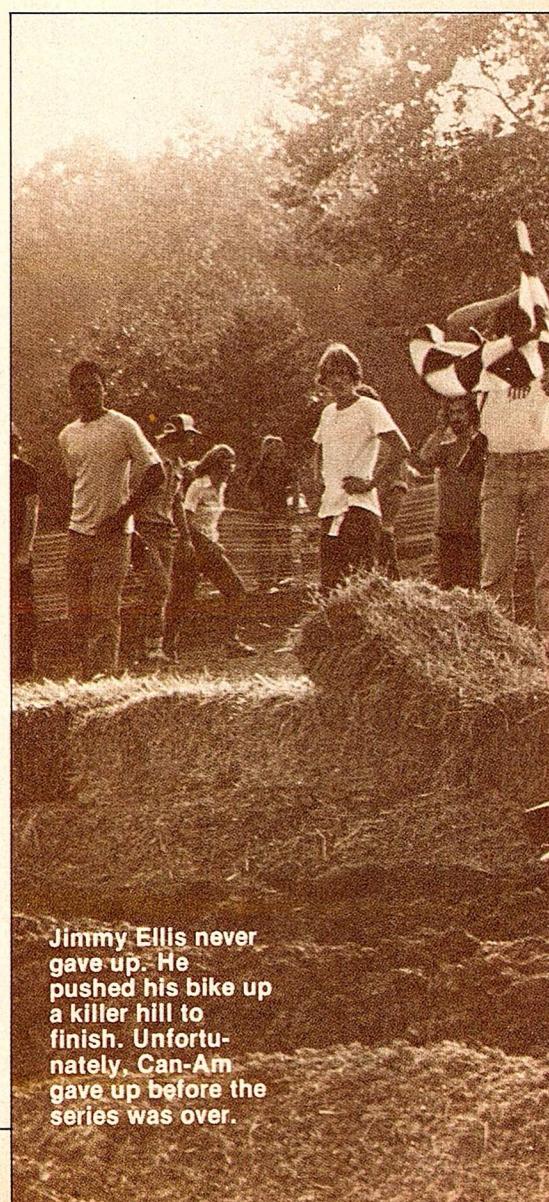
Good weather greeted the Trans-AMA circus for the second straight week and good luck came back to Marty Smith. Marty notched his

second-ever Trans-AMA victory with a 2-3 ride behind moto winners Jim Pomeroy and Bob Hannah. Roger DeCoster suffered from mediocre starts that set him too far back to make much ground up on the hectic pace of the leaders. Roger finished third.

The riders held a massive gate crash in the first moto, but only Jimmy Ellis, Gaylon Mosier and Tommy Croft were penalized. Jim Pomeroy squeezed by Ellis to take the lead in the first half of the moto. Ellis slackened his pace after a signboard told him he was going to be docked a lap. As Ellis slowed, Marty Smith took over second place on his Dave Arnold-tuned RC. Pomeroy almost threw his lead away with a quick spin-out that allowed Marty to come up on his rear fender, but held on to win. Roger DeCoster came from 15th at the start to nab third place ahead of West German Herbert Schmitz. Privateers Mickey Boone and Jim Gibson scored top-ten finishes in the first moto. Boone backed it up in the second moto for sixth overall and



Tony D. massages a Texas berm on his way to second for the day.



Jimmy Ellis never gave up. He pushed his bike up a killer hill to finish. Unfortunately, Can-Am gave up before the series was over.



Jimmy Weinert came in fresh off a broken arm and ended up in an auto accident. In between he was good.



ROCKET ROGER DECOSTER

The Universal Man



□ The 1977 racing season will go down in motocross history as the year the five-time 500cc World Champion and four-time Trans-AMA Series Champion was no longer the fastest rider in the world. He's probably still the best when it comes to winning, but on a speed basis, Team Yamaha just pulled out the lead in the horsepower race over the Suzuki team leader. This past year's 500cc World Championship showed that based on points Heikki Mikkola was faster as he pulled off the title from Roger, then for the Trans-AMA it was Bob Hannah and Marty Smith who were consistently roosting on the R.D.

What remains for Roger, though, is the experience, strength, slyness and cunning of competing for nearly ten years in the elite upper echelon of the world's most fierce and demanding form of motor racing. At 32 years old, he's not going to be winning as many individual races as he once did, but he's still made of the stuff that garners titles and championships. The 1977 Trans-AMA Series proved this. While Roger would have liked to have beaten out Marty Smith and Bob Hannah for every moto win of the Series, in the back of his mind he knew that consistent top-five finishes in each moto usually added up to top-three overall finishes at each Sunday's race, and in the long run those added up to his fourth Trans-AMA Series victory.

On almost a weekly basis, the Series centered on the battles between Hannah, Smith and DeCoster, whether they were back in the pack or trading paint over the lead. The most exciting showdown probably took place in the opening moto at Puyallup, where Roger and Bob careened off each other and stuffed 21-inch wheels where the sun was dim for nearly 30 minutes. When the bruises and dents ended, Roger had developed a new respect for the rider some 12 years his junior.

"Hannah's so wild sometimes — a good rider, but wild. He kept running into me. Bouncing back and forth across the track. My bike looks like it was run over. He hit into me in the air off a jump and knocked my bike out of gear. He's gutsy . . . never afraid of anything. I stayed away from him after that."

Roger knows that the competition is getting tougher with each passing season, but as this year's Trans-AMA Series once again bore out, he's still "THE MAN."

1977 TRANS-AMA

an 8-7 score for the day.

The second moto opened to Marty Smith jamming through the corner first, followed by Bob Hannah and Jimmy Ellis on the new prototype Can-Am, the second Open class prototype this year. Marty was on his way to a convincing Trans-AMA victory until he took an unscheduled dive into the mudhole. From that point on, Hannah's Yamaha was home free, but Bob had ridden a listless first moto (seventh) and the moto win would only garner him second overall. Marty remounted to finish third in the moto behind the Honda of Brad Lackey. Third was good enough to win the overall. Roger finished 3-4 for third. Pomeroy couldn't match his first-moto pace and dropped to eighth in the second round for fourth.

VIRGINIA TRANS-AMA RESULTS

500cc INTERNATIONAL: 1. Marty Smith 2-3 (Hon); 2. Bob Hannah 7-1 (Yam); 3. Roger DeCoster 3-4 (Suz); 4. Jim Pomeroy 1-8 (Hon); 5. Danny LaPorte 6-6 (Suz); 6. Mickey Boone 8-7 (Suz); 7. Steve Stackable 9-10 (Mai); 8. Tony DiStefano 5-14 (Suz); 9. Brad Lackey DNF-2 (Hon); 10. Gary Semics 12-11 (Kaw); 11. Herbert Schmitz 4-23 (Mai); 12. Gaylon Mosier DNF-5 (Mai); 13. Tommy Croft 18-9 (Hon); 14. Jim Gibson 10-17 (Yam); 15. Rick Burgett 13-15 (Yam); 16. Jimmy Ellis 17-12 (C-A); 17. Steve Wise 14-16 (Suz); 18. Kent Howerton 11-21 (Hus); 19. Rex Staten 15-18 (H-D); 20. Pierre Karsmakers DNF-13 (Yam).

NEW YORK

**Unadilla Valley Sports Center,
New Berlin, New York**

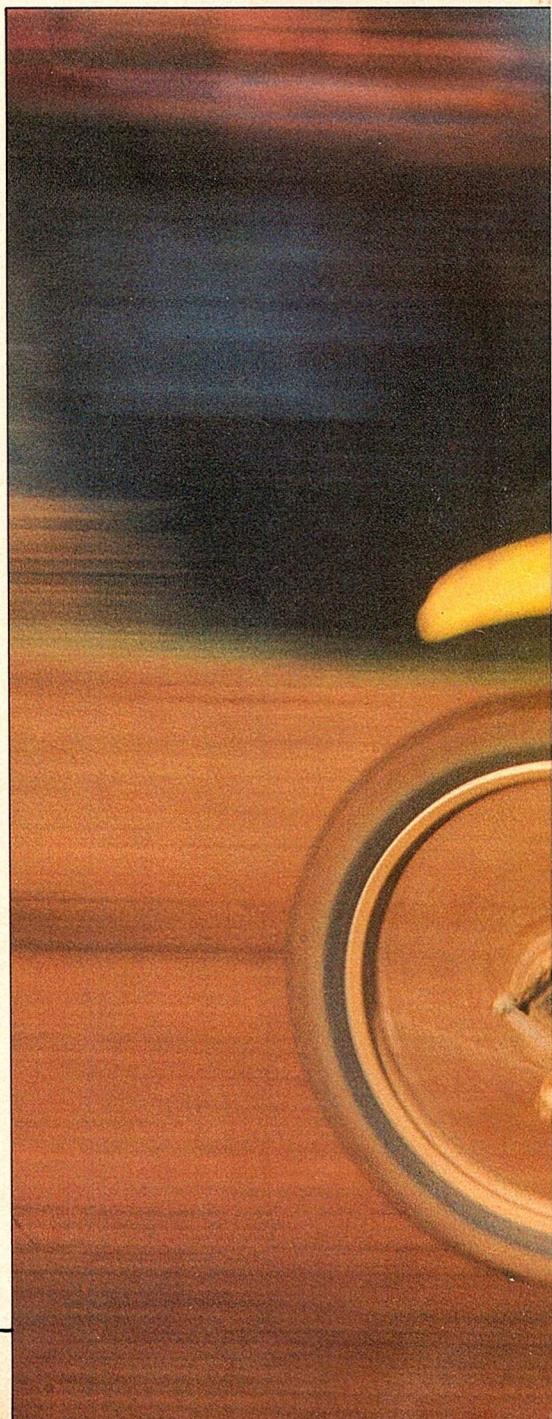
The weather finally turned sour at Unadilla, but even with rotten atmospherics nothing can detract from the classic Unadilla layout. DeCoster is the master of Unadilla. He rarely loses on this challenging natural terrain

track, but with two laps to go in the second moto DeCoster was losing by 30 seconds to Team Honda's Brad Lackey. But Lackey crashed, flooded the engine and watched the mud-caked DeCoster win his second Trans-AMA of the series.

The first moto was a European show, as DeCoster breezed by Kawasaki's holeshot artist Gary Semics and took the point. Belgian Andre Malherbe, third-ranked 250 rider in the world, came shooting out of nowhere to pass Marty Smith, Steve Stackable, Gary Semics and Roger DeCoster! Malherbe's KTM was finding the slippery uphills to its liking as he and DeCoster proceeded to put on a European runaway. With ten minutes to go Roger's persistence paid off and



Herbert Schmitz pulls his Malco into the lead during one of the frequent rainfalls that made the Trans-AMA look like it was being contested on brown tapioca.



he slipped under the young Belgian to take the lead and the win. Malherbe was caught off-guard and Brad Lackey nailed him down a straightaway for second. Hannah and Smith were fourth and fifth.

A first-turn crash in the second moto knocked Bengt Aberg and Marty Smith out of contention, but DeCoster, Tommy Croft, Herbert Schmitz, Pomeroy, Malherbe and Lackey were still running out front. DeCoster was blinded by a burst of mud from his front wheel and erred, allowing Pomeroy to gun his Honda by. DeCoster cleared his vision problems momentarily and regained the lead. But, vision was Roger's major problem, and he again lost sight of the track and dropped back to sixth place.

For the umpteenth time in the 1977 Trans-AMA it was an all-Honda show, with Lackey grabbing the lead from teammate Jim Pomeroy and Tommy Croft in third. 1-2-3 for Honda. Pomeroy crashed out of the top three at the 30-minute mark. Lackey had the overall in the bag. Lackey was leading, Croft was second, Danny LaPorte was third and DeCoster was 30 seconds adrift in fourth.

Then Brad Lackey pulled his stalling act, allowing Tommy Croft to sweep by to victory, but in the Tomahawk's wake came Roger DeCoster and Danny LaPorte. Brad Lackey moved back into fifth on the last lap for second overall. So close, but so far. Croft was third ahead of Andre Malherbe (3-6) and Danny LaPorte. The first privateer was

Steve Wise back in 15th place.

NEW YORK TRANS-AMA RESULTS

500cc INTERNATIONAL: 1. Roger DeCoster 1-2 (Suz); 2. Brad Lackey 2-5 (Hon); 3. Tommy Croft 11-1 (Hon); 4. Andre Malherbe 3-6 (Pen); 5. Danny LaPorte 8-3 (Suz); 6. Bob Hannah 4-8 (Yam); 7. Jimmy Ellis 7-7 (C-A); 8. Marty Smith 5-13 (Hon); 9. Jim Pomeroy 16-4 (Hon); 10. Rick Burgett 12-9 (Yam); 11. Gary Semics 6-16 (Kaw); 12. Kent Howerton 13-11 (Hus); 13. Gaylon Mosier 17-10 (Mai); 14. Steve Stackable 9-15 (Mai); 15. Steve Wise 14-14 (Suz); 16. Rex Staten 10-DNF (H-D); 17. Mickey Kessler DNF-12 (Mon); 18. Bengt Aberg 15-DNF (Yam); 19. Tony DiStefano 20-17 (Suz); 20. Bob Thompson DNF-18 (Mai).

MICHIGAN

Red Bud T'N'T, Buchanan, Michigan

If the weather had been rainy and cold at Unadilla, the caravans that cruised into Michigan were greeted by the unwelcome sight of rain and snow.



1977 TRANS-AMA

Roger DeCoster held a convincing series lead of 26 points over Marty Smith, who was closely pursued by Bob Hannah and Jim Pomeroy. Hannah obviously had not been too happy with his erratic Trans-AMA performances in the first three rounds, because he blitzed both motos in the Michigan snowstorm.

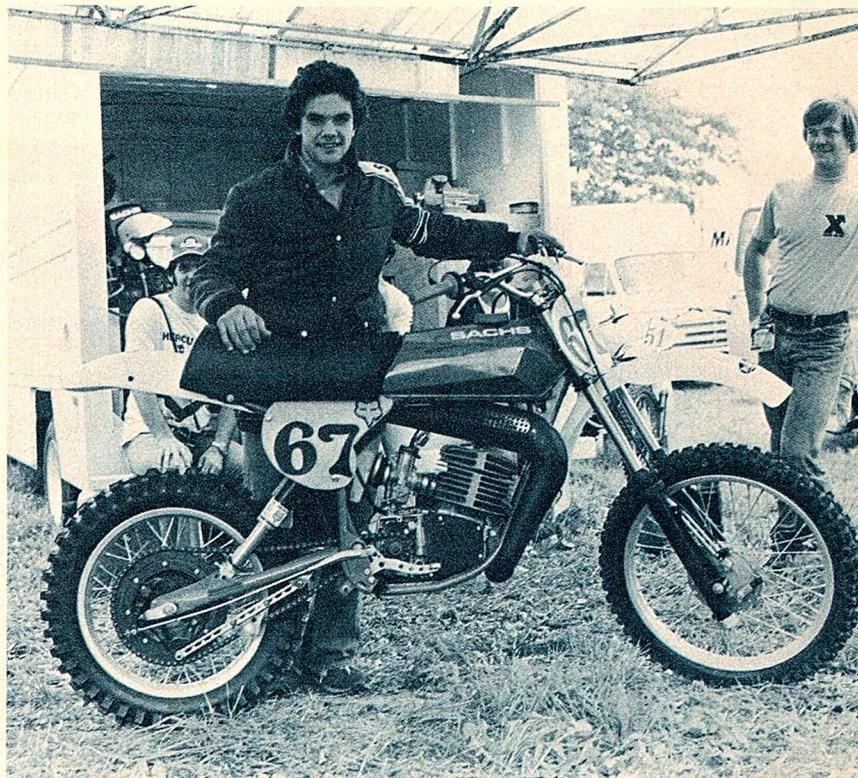
The weather played a big hand in the day's outcomes. The starting gate refused to cooperate in the thick, slimy mud, and the AMA resorted to flag starts, quite unsuccessfully. Tommy Croft read the quivering, shivering flagman best and grabbed the holeshot. Pierre Karsmakers passed Croft on the early laps, as did Herbert Schmitz. Schmitz then passed Pierre and held on to the lead until the halfway point. Jim Pomeroy had played out a tactical charge through the pack and displaced Maico's Herbert Schmitz at the midway sign. Bob Hannah had positioned himself on Pomeroy's rear fender and followed the Honda all the way to the front. DeCoster and Wolsink floundered back in seventh and eighth. Herbert Schmitz's engine crapped out. Pomeroy looked like a sure winner, but Jim Pomeroy's luck isn't even good enough to be called bad luck. Pomeroy stalled his bike in a slow corner and Hannah drove by for the win. Pomeroy restarted for second, Lackey was third and Croft fourth. Again it was three Hondas in the top four places.

Tommy Croft holeshot the second moto, after it was restarted once, but Bob Hannah wasn't waiting for luck to help him this time as he blazed through the sleet to take the lead and walk away with the win and overall. At the end Jim Pomeroy was again in second, Marty Smith was third and Tommy Croft finished fourth once more. Three Hondas in the top four again! But the overall went to Yamaha's Bob Hannah. Honda took overall positions second, third, fourth and fifth with Pomeroy, Croft, Smith and Lackey.

Top European was Roger DeCoster back in seventh overall. Gerrit Wolsink managed tenth overall, but a leg injury continued to get worse. Husqvarna sent over Hakan Carlqvist, but the best he could manage was 11th with a 15-11 score. Top privateer was Basset Racing-sponsored Jim Gibson in 18th.

PROTOTYPE 250 SACHS

New West German charger



Making its first introduction into competition during the Trans-AMA Series was the new 250cc Sachs motocrosser which was campaigned by newly signed factory Sachs rider Frank Stacy in the Support class. The bike Frank rode was a pre-production prototype sent over from the German factory for testing, with actual production models scheduled to arrive sometime early in 1978.

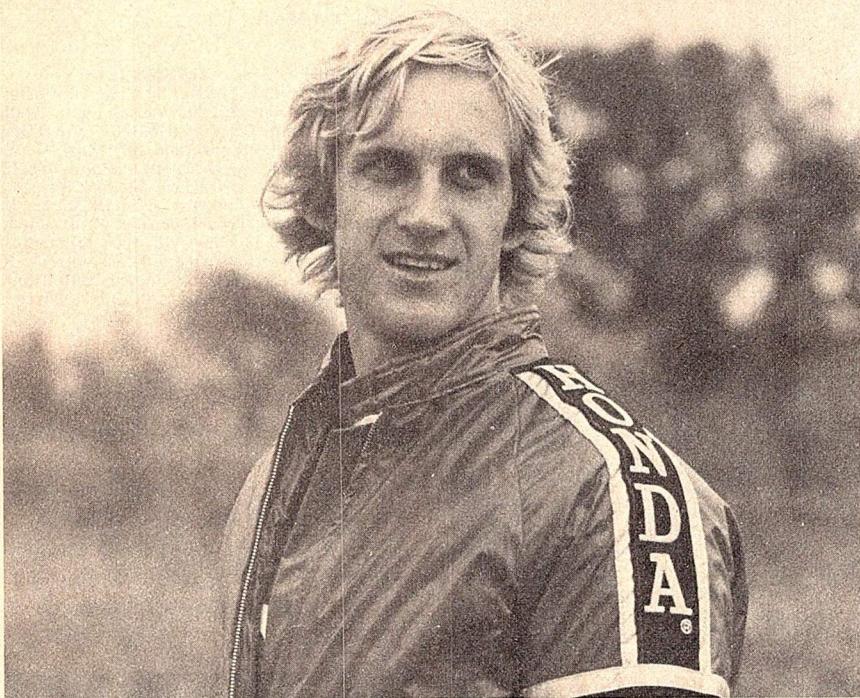
The basic engine design of the 250cc motocrosser has been in use for the past two years in the Hercules/Sachs enduro bikes, but this was the first time a motocross version had been made available. Magnesium engine cases house a five-speed transmission and Motoplat CDI electronics, with the aluminum cylinder using conventional piston-porting induction fed through a 38mm Bing carb.

Much of the Sachs' development research seems to come from KTM, but with the cluttered KTM engine and chassis designs cleaned up. Frank's bike uses Fox Airshox to provide 10.75 inches of rear wheel travel, while up front the stock ten-inch-travel Ceriani leading axle magnesium forks have been modified with an air/spring kit. The production Sachs will be fitted with Koni gas shocks. Hubs have not been finalized yet, as the prototype was using a KTM rear wheel assembly. The fuel tank is a smallish-looking welded-up aluminum design, but the production versions will more than likely be steel. Complete bike weight is extremely light at 211-215 pounds.

The only drawback with the 250 prototype is that it seems to be a little down on power despite its light weight. The engine porting is rather conservative and needs to be reworked, perhaps with the addition of a reed valve assembly.

GRAHAM NOYCE

Up from the Maico farm team



□ The newest member of Team Honda, making his riding debut in the Trans-AMA Series, is Englishman Graham "Crackers" Noyce, who Americans got a first look at last year when he raced his factory Maico at the Carlsbad Grand Prix. From the city of South Hampton, 20-year-old Graham started seriously racing at age ten, then at 16 he picked up his first sponsorship from Rickman, where he was working full-time after leaving school. Two years later, at 18, Graham was signed to a Maico factory contract for his first works sponsorship.

At first, Graham was racing for the Maico distributor of Great Britain, but it wasn't long before his skill had netted him the title of England's "young new sensation" and he was campaigning the 500cc World Championship as teammate to Adolf Weil. During 1976 and 1977 he won the British Championship, run with both 250cc and Open machines.

It was at the conclusion of the 1977 British Championship that Graham, like many of his former Maico teammates, was lured off the German marque by a lucrative Japanese contract. This time, though, the sponsor was Honda, who wanted Graham to campaign the RC400 in the 500cc Grands Prix. Because of the British Championships, he missed the first half of the Trans-AMA Series, but Honda felt the series would be good experience for him to become familiar with the potent RC400 Type IIB. His first ride on the bike at the Missouri round, though, proved less than spectacular when he crashed on the first lap of the opening moto and suffered a shoulder separation. Returning for the last two rounds of the Series, Graham rode well to show Honda his potential for 1978.

"I like the fantastic organization at Honda, because all they require of me is to ride the bikes. I have so much confidence in the Hondas, I know I should be able to really get it together for the Grands Prix and do well."

MICHIGAN TRANS-AMA RESULTS

500cc INTERNATIONAL: 1. Bob Hannah 1-1 (Yam); 2. Jim Pomeroy 2-2 (Hon); 3. Tommy Croft 4-4 (Hon); 4. Marty Smith 6-3 (Hon); 5. Brad Lackey 3-9 (Hon); 6. Marty Tripes 8-5 (H-D); 7. Roger DeCoster 7-8 (Suz); 8. Rick Burgett 11-6 (Yam); 9. Gary Semics 6-12 (Kaw); 10. Gerrit Wolsink 9-13 (Suz); 11. Hakan Carlqvist 15-11 (Hus); 12. Danny LaPorte 10-16 (Suz); 13. Steve Stackable 13-14 (Mai); 14. Andre Malherbe DNF-7 (Pen); 15. Gaylon Mosier DNF-10 (Mai); 16. Kent Howerton 12-DNF (Hus); 17. Tony DiStefano 17-17 (Suz); 18. Jim Gibson 14-DNF (Yam); 19. Jimmy Ellis DNF-15 (C-A); 20. Steve Wise 18-19 (Suz).

MISSOURI

Cycle World, St. Peters, Missouri

Bob Hannah's victory in the snow and sleet of Michigan moved him up into contention for the Trans-AMA series win. The weather improved as the circus moved south to Missouri, but the competition narrowed down to a two-man battle — DeCoster versus Hannah.

Brad Lackey whipped his Steve Whitelock RC400 through the first turn ahead of the pack, but DeCoster and Hannah put the pressure on. Tony D. was fourth, with Marty Smith fifth. Bullet Bob Hannah took the lead on the second lap with DeCoster in pursuit. The two prime protagonists, Hannah and DeCoster, had a clear track ahead and the series lead at stake.

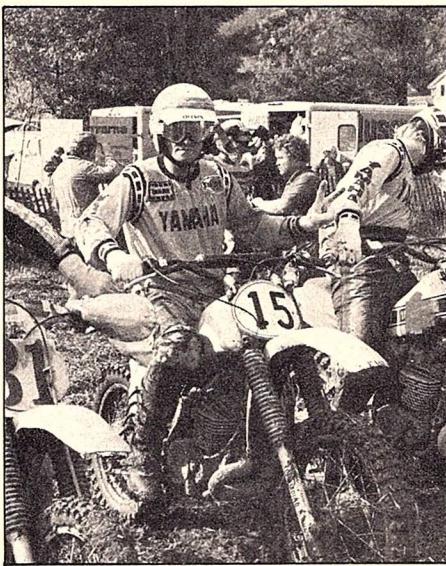
Bob opened up a ten-second lead that Roger couldn't whittle down. DeCoster knows the score, and there is no difference between a first and a second place in the first moto — it's the second one that counts.

The second moto was a classic of motocross. Wolsink grabbed the lead, but killed the engine in a slow corner, giving it to Jammin' Jimmy Weinert, riding his first race since breaking his arm. Weinert's lead was short-lived, but the Jammer showed the crowd that his injury-plagued year is behind him. Hannah passed Weinert, with Smith and DeCoster knocking on the door. By the third lap of the race it was Hannah and DeCoster. Roger set his sights on the young Yamaha rider and began to pour the pressure on. Hannah fought back, but at the halfway point Roger slipped under the Yamaha and took the lead. Hannah charged back. For the next ten minutes the two riders never opened up a space bigger than ten feet between each other. Hannah tried every trick in the book, but DeCoster knew them all, and at the ten-minute

1977 TRANS-AMA



Tommy Croft rounded off a good, consistent year with some good, consistent finishes.



The Europeans: Belgian Andre Malherbe, Sweden's Bengt Aberg, German Herbert Schmitz and Mission Viejo's Pierre Karsmakers.

point R.D. turned up the gas and moved away from the tired Yamaha rider.

DeCoster won his third out of five events and again opened up a points lead of eight points. Hannah finished second for the day and held on to second place in the series. Marty Smith was third for the day with a 4-4 score. Smith was also third in the standings. Tommy Croft was fourth for the day, while Suzuki teamsters Tony DiStefano and Gerrit Wolsink were fifth and sixth. Wolsink flew home after the race to rest his injured leg.

MISSOURI TRANS-AMA RESULTS

500cc INTERNATIONAL: 1. Roger DeCoster 2-1 (Suz); 2. Bob Hannah 1-2 (Yam); 3. Marty Smith 4-4 (Hon); 4. Tommy Croft 3-5 (Hon); 5. Tony DiStefano 6-3 (Suz); 6. Gerrit Wolsink 8-7 (Suz); 7. Steve Stackable 10-8 (Mai); 8. Danny LaPorte 13-6 (Suz); 9. Kent Howerton 12-9 (Hus); 10. Rick Burgett 7-15 (Yam); 11. Hakan Carlqvist 11-14 (Hus); 12. Marty Tripes 5-22 (H-D); 13. Jim Weinert 19-10 (Kaw); 14. Gary Semics 16-13 (Kaw); 15. Rich Eierstedt 18-12 (H-D); 16. Pierre Karsmakers 9-* (Yam); 17. Steve Wise 21-22 (Suz); 18. Jim Pomeroy 15-18 (Hon); 19. Parry Klassen 17-17 (Mai); 20. Brad Lackey 14-* (Hon).

TEXAS

Rabbit Run Raceway, Plano, Texas

Team Suzuki was really cooking by the time the Trans-AMA hit Texas. Roger DeCoster could smell another Trans-AMA series win and poured it on. Tony DiStefano and Danny LaPorte took second and fifth to give Suzuki

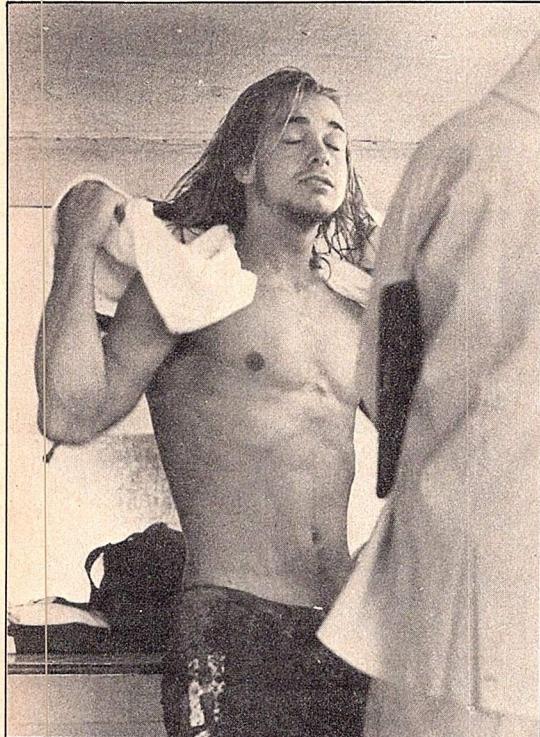


Steve Wise had never ridden a 500 before, but he was top privateer at most of the races.

three riders in the top five. Graham Noyce had arrived at Missouri for his first Team Honda ride since parting from Maico, but in Missouri he bit the dust and separated his shoulder. Graham sat out Texas to wait for his shoulder to heal.

Kent Howerton announced that he was quitting Husqvarna after the Trans-AMA was over, but took his 390 to the holeshot in his home state. Howerton was lucky, as were Tommy Croft, Gaylon Mosier, Herbert Schmitz and Roger DeCoster, because everyone else was stuck behind a 15-bike pile-up. Croft got Howerton on the second lap, but it was to no avail, as Roger DeCoster passed both riders on the fifth lap to wheelie away with the win. Howerton, Croft and LaPorte battled each other for 20 minutes for second, but Tony D. motored up to them, through them and by them for second behind Roger. Howerton charged back and forced Tony to make a mistake, which cost Texas a few feet of fence. Tony got going again in fourth behind DeCoster, Howerton and Croft.

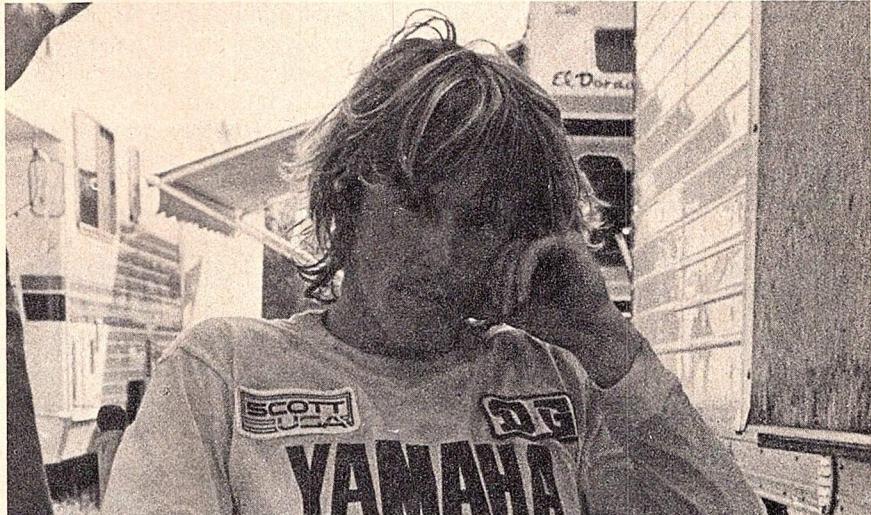
Bob Hannah, Marty Tripes and Herbert Schmitz DNFed the first moto, but Hannah came back to win the second moto in a drizzly rain. Brad Lackey gave up the early lead, but held on for second. Tony DiStefano charged up to third place ahead of Roger, who was caught napping at the gate.



Marty Smith grew a beard for the Trans-AMA. When nobody noticed it, he shaved it off. It didn't slow him down either way.

BOB "HURRICANE" HANNAH

What should have been



To a lot of people, Bob Hannah should have been America's first rider to win the Trans-AMA Series. But in the case of the "Hurricane Kid," the words *should have* seemed to be popping up at an unusually high percentage rate during the 1977 racing season. After running away with the Florida Winter-AMA Series and the Supercross Series with a stock Yamaha YZ250D at the beginning of the year, a switch to the exotic Yamaha works bike for the three National Championships and the Trans-AMA Series brought Bob nothing but problems. Clearly the fastest rider in America in 1977, as he garnered more points than anyone else in AMA competition for 1976 and 1977, Bob suffered enough mechanical breakdowns with his works bikes to prevent him from winning the 125cc, 250cc and 500cc National Championships and the Trans-AMA Series for 1977.

The Trans-AMA Series had to be Bob's biggest disappointment, as DNFs robbed him of an overall win at the very first race and then, when he was closing the points gap on Roger DeCoster in the weeks which followed, the curse of the Hurricane occurred again. Speed-wise, Bob was a match for Roger. Bob's style was unorthodox and crazy — usually bordering on the brink of tank-slapping total disaster, but he always stayed up on two wheels and with Roger as long as the bike held together. What won the 1977 Trans-AMA Series for Roger was his ultra-reliable RN400 works Suzuki and a lot of experience at winning. What cost the title for Bob was an OW26 Yamaha works bike that was being developed on the racetrack and not back at the factory like the Suzukis had been.

Throughout the Series, though, Bob never let the problems get him down. He never once bad-mouthed the bike or went around suggesting that he might have won a race or championship.

"All I can call it is bad luck, and there's not much I can do about it. I'd have liked to win the Trans-AMA Series and be the first American [to do so], but if I can't have it, I'm glad to see Roger getting it again. At least I have another chance next year to be the first American to pull it off."

This past season, the works Yamahas were clearly outclassed in usable horsepower, handling, weight and reliability by the other works machines from Honda and Suzuki. Still, Bob proved throughout it all to be among the best riders in America, and one of the best in the world.

1977 TRANS-AMA

Roger's 1-4 was enough to take the overall away from Tony D.'s 4-3. Brad Lackey's second in the second moto got him up to third overall, while Kent Howerton got a bad start to finish with a 2-10 score for fourth.

TEXAS TRANS-AMA RESULTS

500cc INTERNATIONAL: 1. Roger DeCoster 1-4 (Suz); 2. Tony DiStefano 4-3 (Suz); 3. Brad Lackey 9-2 (Hon); 4. Kent Howerton 2-10 (Hus); 5. Danny LaPorte 5-6 (Suz); 6. Tommy Croft 3-11 (Hon); 7. Marty Smith 6-7 (Hon); 8. Jim Pomeroy 10-5 (Hon); 9. Bob Hannah DNF-1 (Yam); 10. Gaylon Mosier 8-13 (Mai); 11. Rick Burgett 18-9 (Yam); 12. Gary Semics 14-14 (Kaw); 13. Steve Stackable 7-* (Mai); 14. Marty Tripes *-8 (H-D); 15. Pierre Karsmakers 12-17 (Yam); 16. Rex Staten 15-16 (H-D); 17. Jim Weinert 17-15 (Kaw); 18. Steve Wise 11-* (Suz); 19. Herbert Schmitz *-12 (Mai); 20. Mickey Boone 16-18 (Suz).

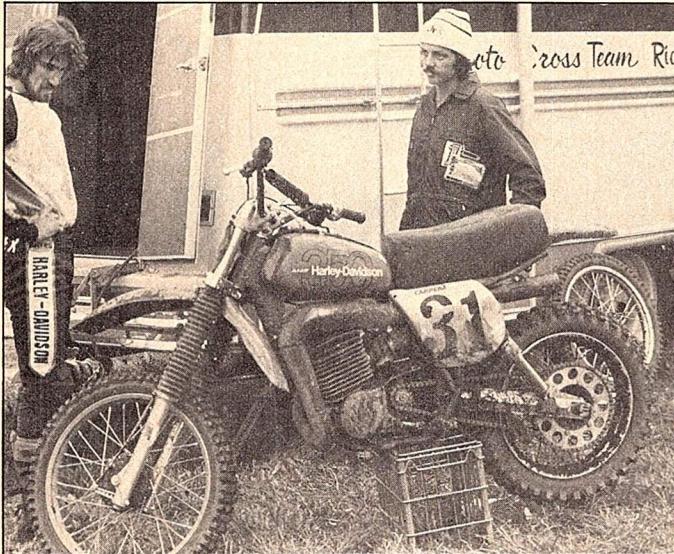
WASHINGTON Puyallup Raceway, Puyallup, Washington

As the Trans-AMA began to wind down, the three top riders with a chance of winning had to kick out the jams. DeCoster was leading Hannah by 26 points and Smith by 43. Each moto win is worth 25 points to the winner, so Roger was in a very good position with only two events left.

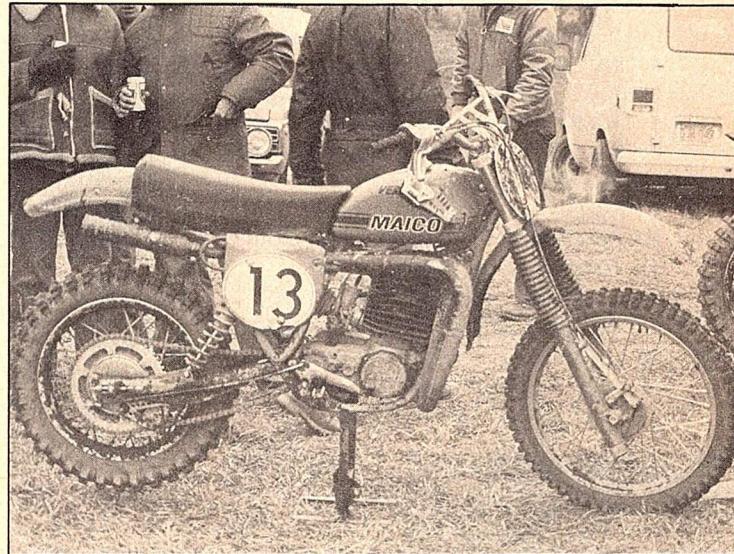
Puyallup Raceway seems to live in a veritable fogbank of dark clouds and rain, but in 1977 the rain didn't fall, it just felt like it would.

The Honda horsepower really showed itself in the Washington sand as the first moto opened to a fleet of red flyers leading the pack. Marty Smith, Jim Pomeroy, Tommy Croft and Brad Lackey, and that is how they stayed for the whole moto. Roger DeCoster was the first non-Honda finisher in fifth. Pierre Karsmakers was sixth and Bob Hannah was seventh.

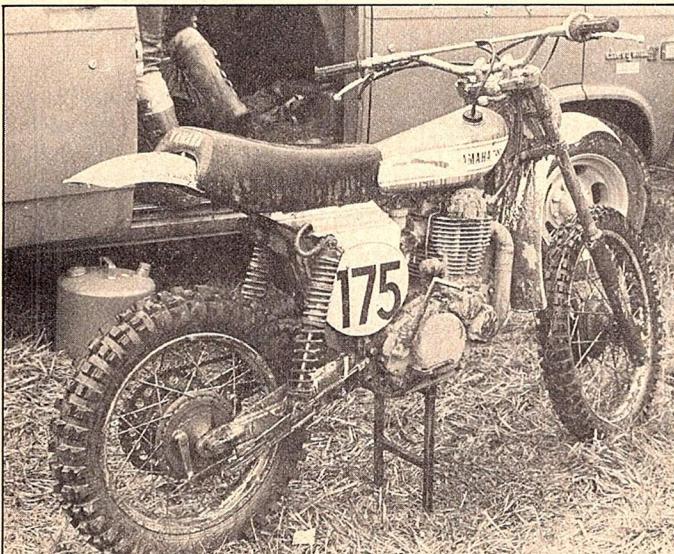
In the second moto Smith pulled another holeshot and was gone. Tommy Croft was the only rider capable of making a dent in Smith's lead, but a completely frazzled rear wheel forced him out of the race. DeCoster started his charge late in the moto, but it was too late, and Marty Smith held on to sweep both motos. Roger DeCoster's 5-2 was good



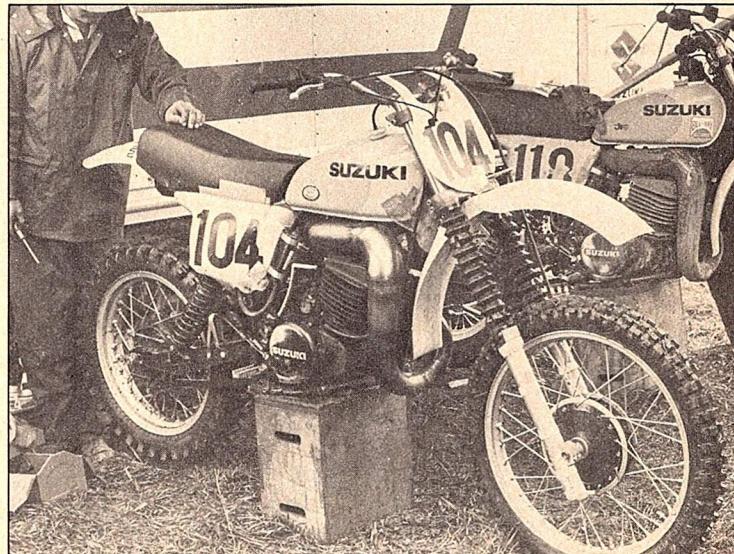
The Harley 350 showed up with a Cross-Up swingarm, Yamaha front hub and Fox Airshox. Rocket Rex Staten had his ups and downs.



Maico had Herbert Schmitz bring over new bikes for Steve Stackable and Gaylon Mosier. Gaylon was lucky number 13 this year.



Bengt Aberg's replica suffered mechanical woes and kept Bengt out of the winner's circle.



Suzuki rarely changes anything major. DeCoster campaigned a 402cc engine, which is in the showrooms now.

enough for second, followed by Lackey, Hannah and DiStefano. Graham Noyce completed his first moto on a Honda for a sixth in the second round after a crash-shortened first moto. Andre Malherbe finished 14th and then packed to go home to do testing at the KTM factory. Herbert Schmitz was 19th and Bengt Aberg finished 20th. There was not a single privateer in the top 20.

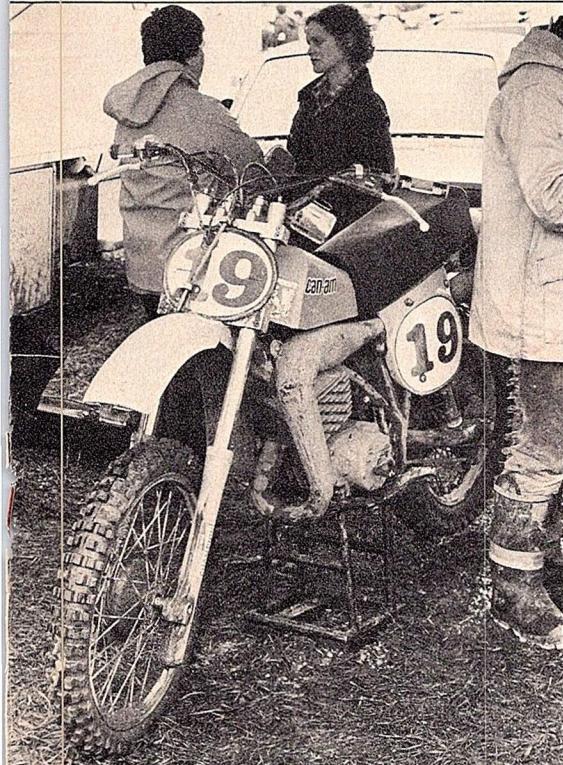
WASHINGTON TRANS-AMA RESULTS

500cc INTERNATIONAL: 1. Marty Smith 1-1 (Hon); 2. Roger DeCoster 5-2 (Suz); 3. Brad Lackey 4-3 (Hon); 4. Bob Hannah 7-5 (Yam); 5. Tony DiStefano 11-4 (Suz); 6. Gaylon Mosier 8-7 (Mai); 7. Rick Burgett 10-8 (Yam); 8. Tommy Croft 2-* (Hon); 9. Jim Pomeroy 3-23 (Hon); 10. Jimmy Weinert 16-10 (Kaw); 11. Rich Eierstedt 9-17 (H-D); 12. Graham Noyce *-6 (Hon); 13. Pierre Karsmakers 6-* (Yam); 14. Andre Malherbe *-9 (KTM); 15. Gary Semics 18-12 (Kaw); 16. Kent Howerton 17-13 (Hus); 17. Steve Stackable 12-18 (Mai); 18. Rex Staten *-11 (H-D); 19. Herbert Schmitz 13-19 (Mai); 20. Bengt Aberg *-14 (Yam).

CALIFORNIA **Sears Point Raceway** **Sonoma, California**

Two things happened at Sears Point Raceway in the final showdown of the season for the 1977 Trans-AMA series. First, Roger DeCoster went into the final event planning on consolidating his already solid points lead. Roger

Continued on page 69



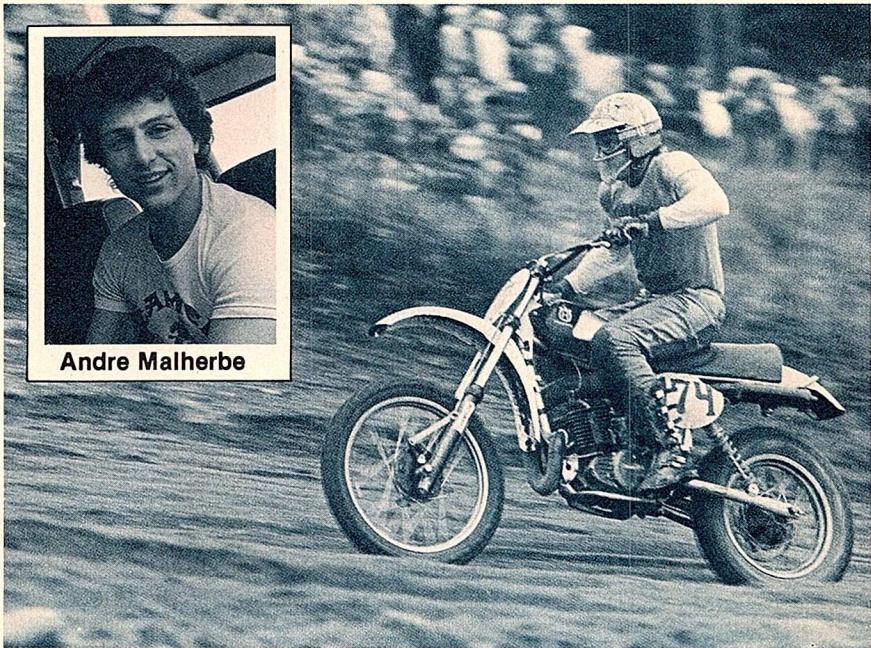
Can-Am gave up on production testing and showed up with a Simons-forked, Fox-shocked one-off. It looked good, ran strong, but withdrew at the midway point.

THE NEW EUROPEANS

Andre Malherbe and Hakan Carlqvist



Andre Malherbe



Sweden's Hakan Carlqvist was a little disgruntled by America.

□ The last few Trans-AMAs have hardly been exciting for us when it came down to getting a look at some fresh new talent from Europe, or even some old talent, for that matter. Not too many factories wanted to send over riders who would be soundly thrashed by the Americans. Still, we did get to see some new faces in this year's Series, if only because their factories wanted to check out new designs for next season's Grand Prix circuit.

Showing the most potential was 20-year-old Belgian Andre Malherbe, who finished third in the 1977 250cc World Championships on a KTM as a privateer. For 1978 Andre will receive full support from KTM in the 500cc GPs, with the Trans-AMA Series being used to test a new 386cc big-bore motor. Andre's best finish of the Series came at rough and bumpy Unadilla, where he placed third, but the course also proved that KTM needed a new frame design to remain competitive, and Andre left America before the Series wrapped up so he could return to the KTM factory in Austria to test new frame designs.

"The Trans-AMA Series was good experience for me," said Andre before leaving. "I had little problems throughout the Series with the bike and its new engine, and a batch of bad gas. It was nice to see America, though, and I hope to come back next year. One thing that really impressed me was the American riders and their very trick motorcycles. Over in Europe, especially in the 250cc Championship, the motorcycles are very stock production."

A little critical of American motocross was Husqvarna's Hakan Carlqvist from Sweden, who rode the 250cc GPs this past season as a development rider testing new frames and suspension. This was his first Trans-AMA Series, though he's been to America a couple of times previously.

"The bike I'm riding in the Trans-AMA has been under testing since last February. It's taken a lot of work to develop it, but it should be really good for next season."

"American riders are into riding fast. I don't think they could do as well in Europe. European tracks require more skill to ride because they're more challenging. Here everyone goes fast because the tracks are fast, but it took Lackey and Pomeroy two years before they could learn to go quickly on European tracks."



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TECHNICAL

KAYABA PRO-LINE SUSPENSION

One RM with the works

By Jody Weisel

□ Back in 1975 I was walking through the pits in Omaha, Nebraska, at the Inter-AMA, heading back to my van. 1975 was one of those wondrous years of suspension development. Privateers were cutting the frames and welding inadequate shocks at every conceivable angle. The factory teams weren't far ahead of us. I was parked next to Team Suzuki, and as I sat down in the back of my van I noticed a thin Japanese man taking photos of the works bikes. Later, over at the pits of fellow Texan Steve Wise, the same Japanese photographer came over to snap pix of Wise's experimental Monroes mounted upside down on his Kawasaki. Later I ran into him standing by the fence next to the gnarliest whoops on the track, filming every bike that came through fast.

Upon introduction, he turned out to be Tet Miyamoto, and in broken English he told me that he was from Kayaba of Japan. In those days Japanese forks weren't the hot setup, so we traded a few words and I wandered off.

Two years later, Kayaba forks are among the best in the world. And, if you count the works forks on Teams Suzuki, Kawasaki, Harley and Yamaha, they probably are the best. But what chance does a poor production bike rider have of getting a shot at the best forks in the world? Well, two years later I drove down to Santa Ana, California, and the same Tet Miyamoto handed me a set of works-like forks. The triple clamps had all those trick mill marks

that off-the-shelf forks can never have. The sliders were really thin. The leading axle mounts look as if a workman had spent hours whittling them out. Tet explained every detail to me. How much oil, how much air, how much travel and how much adjustment. Then, as an extra bonus, he walked over to a small box and pulled out a set of complex and detailed air shocks with nitrogen reservoirs.

As I threw all the stuff in the back of my truck, I was giggling like a kid. After all those years of ogling all the factories' goodies and dreaming about them, here I was driving down the freeway with all the big-bucks components in my pants pocket.

WORKS FORKS FOR YOU

The Kayaba forks are for sale to everyone in America. The cost is \$380. For that amount of moolah you get a set of machined triple clamps which are much lighter and stronger than the stock components available on most bikes. Attached to the triple clamps are a set of 38mm tubes and machined alloy sliders. The travel is ten inches, which is only marginally ($\frac{3}{4}$ -inch) better than stock 250C forks.

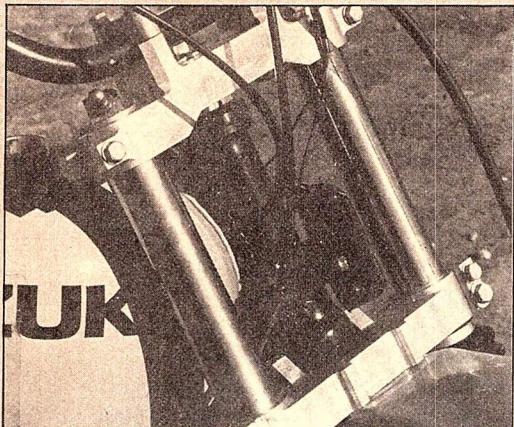
\$380 for ten inches of travel and a 15-percent reduction in weight is a lot of money. Yamaha and Suzuki offer over nine inches of travel stock, good travel, and it comes free after you buy the bike. But fork travel depends on dialing in the right damping and spring characteristics. Kayaba's

special forks come with a long tool that can be inserted down into the fork leg to change the damping characteristics. The tool connects to the top of the rod and has a four-click setting from light to heavy.

The tube size is 2mm larger than the stock production Kayabas, and that pays off in added rigidity. Rigidity means less flex, better control and more consistent stroke pressure. The fork leg and slider overlap is an impressive 7.4 inches.

The forks work and they work well, but you have to play with them and you have to play hard. Kayaba suggested 15 pounds of pressure with automatic transmission fluid measured 155mm from the top of the tube when the forks are collapsed. They wouldn't work to our satisfaction like that. We went to ten-weight Bel-Ray (ATF is normally rated at 15-weight) and dropped the air pressure to ten pounds. For this adjustment we moved the damper clicker from the first notch to the second. The forks are air/spring-controlled and can easily be adjusted if you remember a few rules.

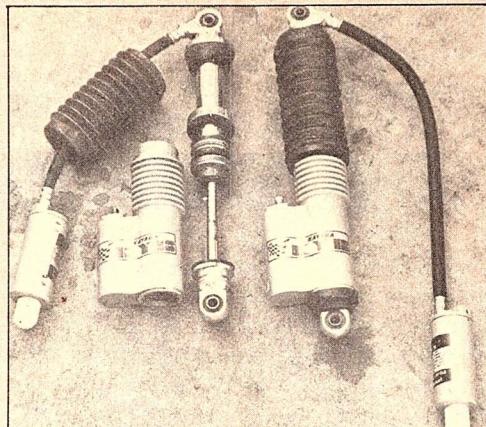
If your forks are too stiff over the small bumps, you should decrease the air pressure. If it is bottoming over the big jumps, you should increase the air pressure. If it is too soft over the big jumps and too hard over the little bumps, you have a problem. If you increase the air pressure the forks will work better on the big jumps, but will get even stiffer on the little ones. The



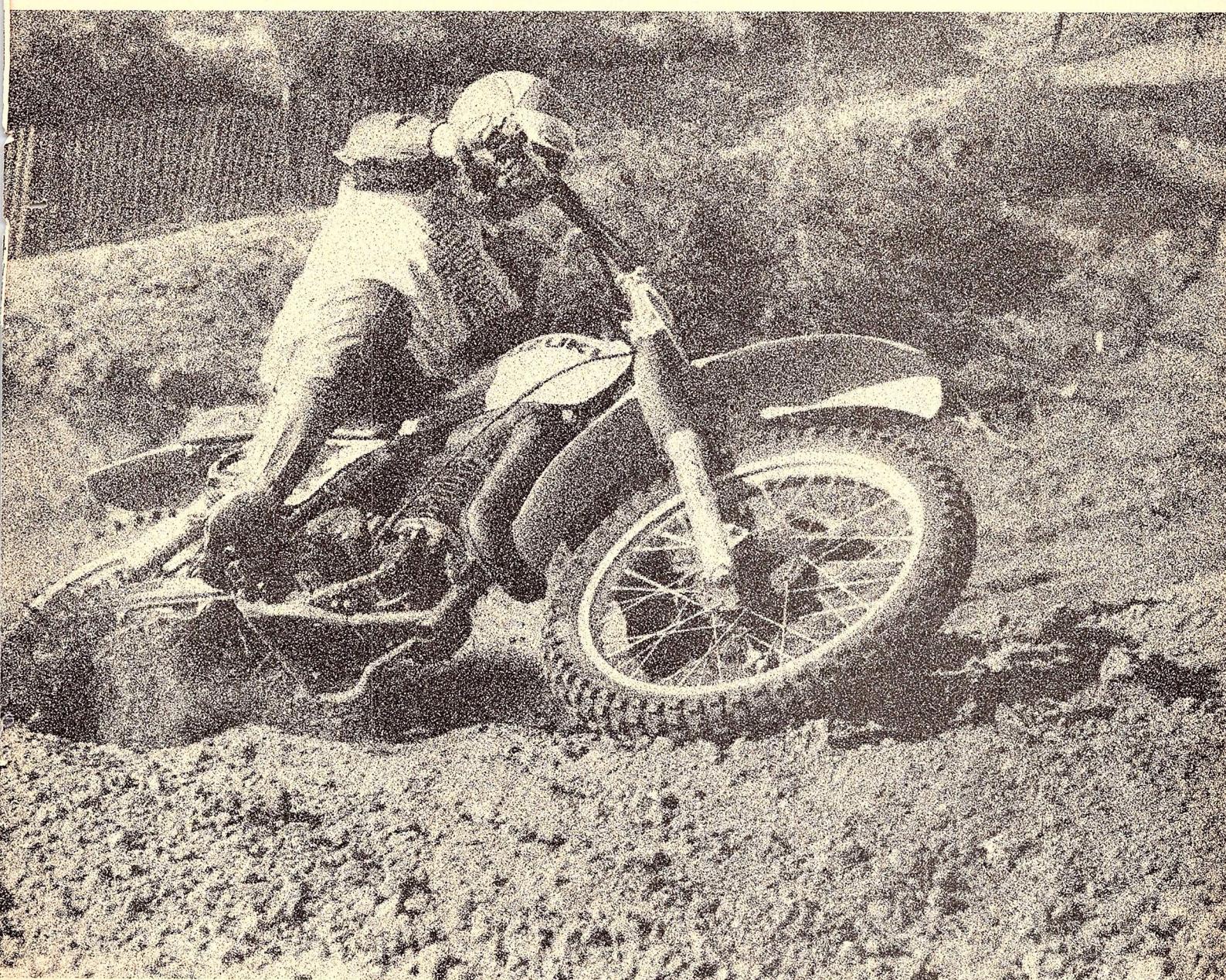
Machined aluminum triple clamps are hollow underneath and extremely light. They could use bar-backs, though.



The Kayaba Pro-Line rear shocks have reservoirs on the body and reservoirs on the frame. They are springless.



The Kayaba shocks come in four lengths. We used the long Husqvarna length on the RM370 because they work better than the suggested Suzuki length.



Radical Ron Turner wrings out the MXA Kayaba test bed in some rare SoCal loamy looseness.

KAYABA PRO-LINE SUSPENSION

key to solving a problem like this is to decrease the air volume. If you add five cc more oil to each leg the air pressure will remain soft on the small bumps, but geometrically increase its air pressure to handle the big jumps.

The Kayaba Pro-Line forks worked excellently once the air pressure, air volume and oil weight were worked out. We always prefer to run five-weight oil whenever possible because it is less susceptible to dramatic fade under heat. The triple clamps need to have bar-backs machined on them so you don't have to remove the handlebars to make the adjustments.

In essence the forks work very well, but motocross needed forks like these, available to the privateer, about a year ago. The forks are available to fit Yamahas, Suzukis, Husqvarnas,

Maicos and Pentons. All of these brands come stock with forks almost as good as the Kayaba Pro-Line models. The triple clamps and the adjustability are the two major advantages.

KAYABA AIR SHOCKS

The Kayaba shocks impressed everyone who saw them as being a more complex version of the highly successful Fox Airshox. The Kayaba shocks don't have a spring. All the compression action is controlled by air pressure, but unlike Moto-X Fox shocks they only have one air chamber. Compression is controlled totally by air, while the rebound is handled by the same nitrogen canister reservoir found on Suzuki RM shocks. Basically, you dial your spring rate in with the air gauge and let the nitrogen handle the rebound damping. But Kayaba wanted

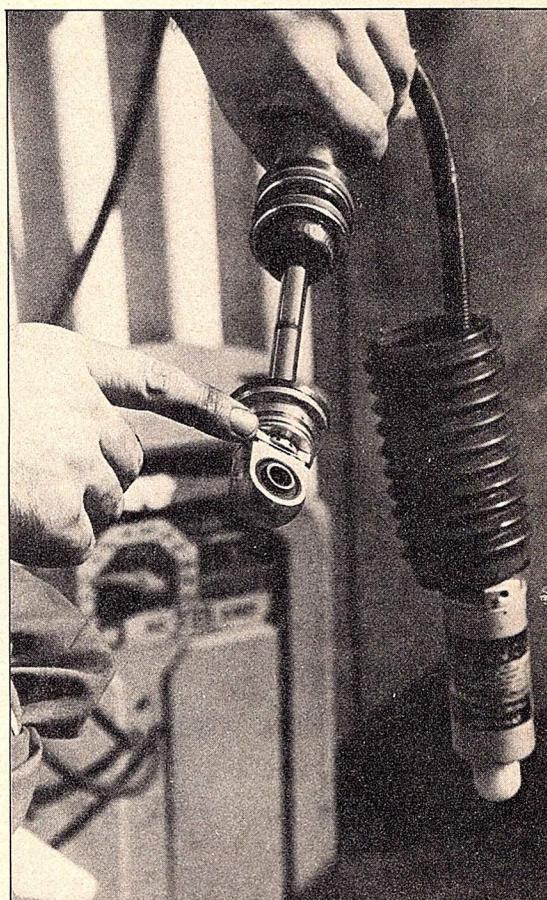
to make these shocks totally adjustable. Damping on the compression stroke, that is, the air pressure side, is controlled by a four-way valve. Rebound dampening is handled by a three-way adjustment on the reservoir. MXA would expect to see this reservoir adjustment come on all the Kayaba reservoir shocks next year.

Kayaba suggested that we set the air pressure at 70 psi with the compression adjustment on the second notch and the rebound damper on the first notch.

In the first test, the bike, an RM370, felt fine for the first five minutes and then the shocks turned to stone. We pressed on through a 30-minute moto and finished with the rear end locked solid. Seventy psi was definitely too much, since once the shocks got warm



The thud should have rung up an 8.2 on the Richter scale, but was barely noticed by the rider, thanks to ten inches of travel.



This little drilled dial can change your damping four ways.

the pressure buildup locked the rear end up. Sixty-five psi wasn't any better, 60 psi was a modest improvement, but the best range we found was from 50 to 58 psi, depending on the rider. The second notch on the compression dampening wasn't good enough. The third notch was a drastic improvement.

From that point on, we loved the shocks. They rate as good as Fox Airshox, which are the best. We had about six races on the Kayaba shocks and were really beginning to love the things.

Then, right in the middle of a 45-minute moto, the brake pedal wrapped around the footpeg. The next moto, the brake pedal caught on the first right-hander. You may well wonder what the brake pedal has to do with the shocks. It is simple. The shocks were losing air and the bike was squatting so

low in the corners that everything was dragging.

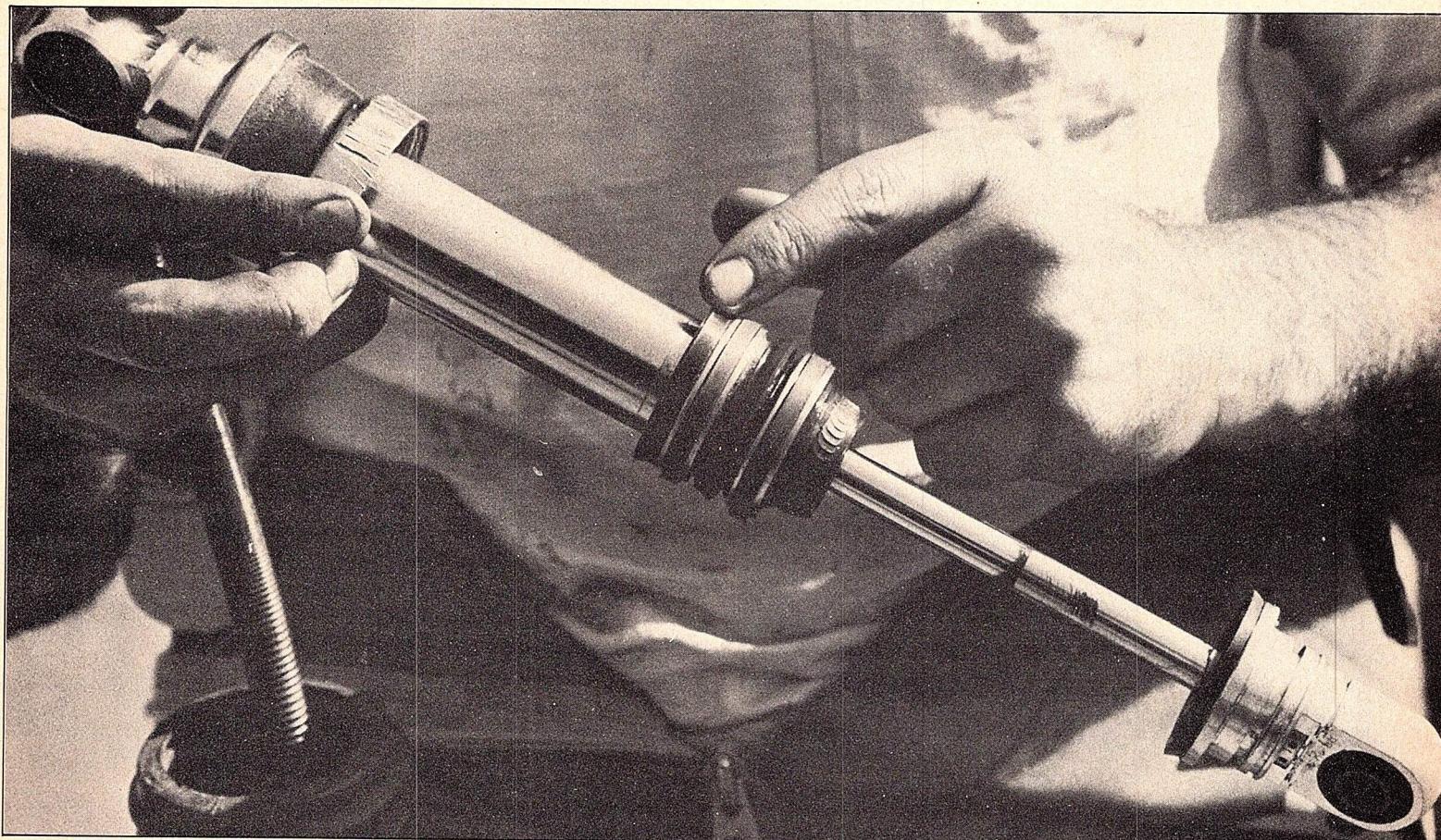
Back in the shop, we removed the shocks and looked them over. We filled them up and let them sit for two hours. The air pressure remained the same. We put them back on the bike and went back out to Saddleback. Ten minutes later, we had a set of flat shocks. The shocks only went flat when we rode. So we pulled off the rubber boots protecting the chrome shafts and discovered that the chrome was pitted and actually peeling off of the shaft.

The Kayaba shocks did not have a high enough chrome finish on them to hold up. The Kayaba reps said it wasn't possible, but the air was leaking. Fox Airshox have an extremely hard chrome finish, which is proven by the fact that they run their shafts exposed to the elements. The chrome shaft is

not the sealing surface. Dirt had fallen down into the shaft body and collected on the air seal, causing the air to leak out of one shock. The shocks are claimed to be non-rebuildable, but the air chamber can be taken apart and cleaned. The shocks are available in several lengths so you can tune the length to your particular bike and desires. The bonus of the infinite adjustability of rebound and dampening makes the shocks an excellent buy.

WHO, WHAT AND WHERE

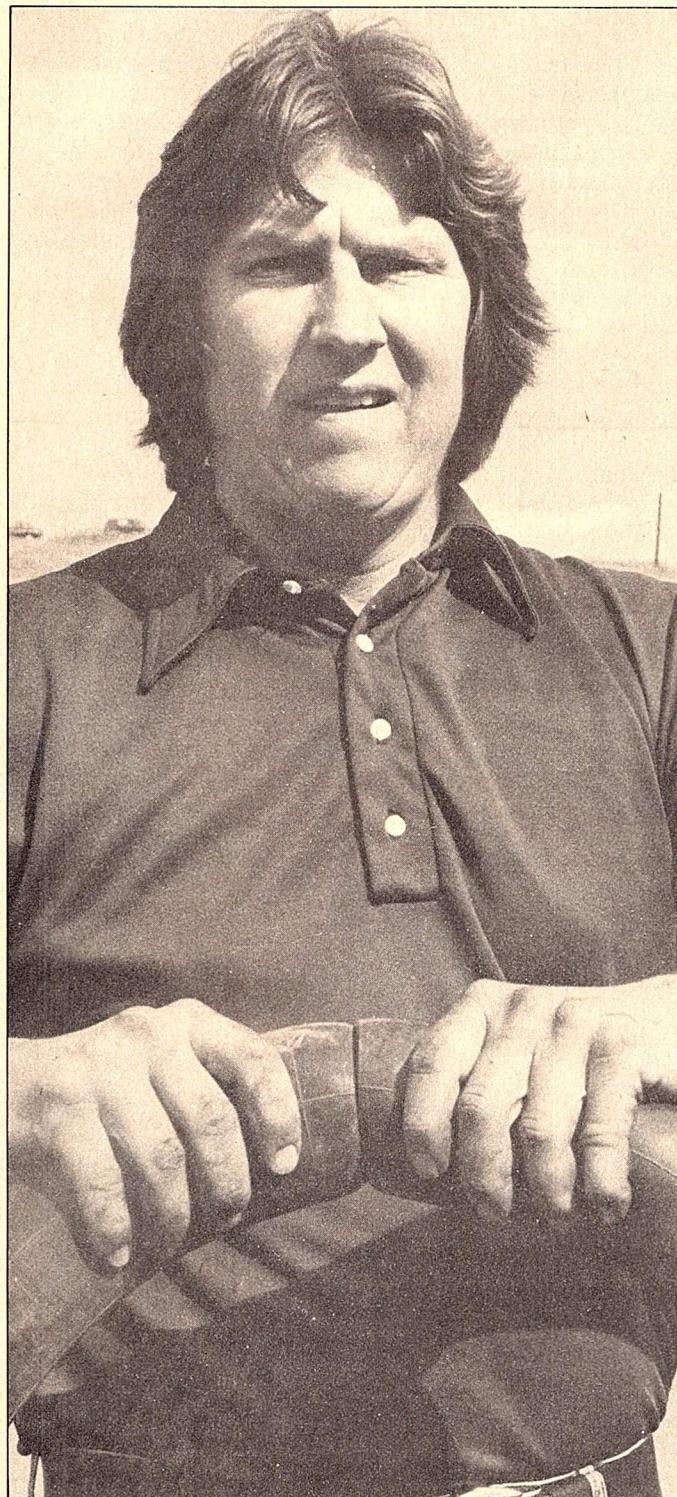
The Kayaba Pro-Line suspension units are available from two sources at the moment. DG Performance Specialties, 1170 Van Horne, Anaheim, California 92806 will carry the complete line to fit all five brands of bikes, and your local Suzuki dealer will be able to supply your RM needs. **W**



The seal blew after five races on two different sets. On springless shocks the seals are essential for avoiding the lowrider look.

**PRODUCT
EVALUATION**

The GROOVY



Claude Maynard drove 250 miles from Blythe to Saddleback so he could get his picture in MXA holding a tube.

□ Let's face it, nobody likes to fix a flat tire. Least of all we here at MXA. We would much rather collapse in our vans and recover to ride the next moto than pull out the old tire irons and go after that perilous puncture. Unless you take along a mechanic/friend who's willing to do the dirty work for you, you can look forward to scraped knuckles, a lot of aggravation and a repeat performance should you pinch the tube again. Many riders will just hang it up for the day when faced with this time-consuming chore that few hot-dog motocrossers relish. Sure, Carl Cranke and the Six Days guys consider it a challenge to see how fast they can get that tire off the bike and the tube changed, but you could use those extra minutes between motos resting up for the next round.

If you already have an exalted factory ride with an army of mechanics to do your wrenching for you, you probably didn't know the tires had tubes in them anyway, but if you are in that elite corps of riders who do their own "factory" maintenance, then anything that might make fixing that flat tire less of a chore for you or your friend/mechanic would probably interest you.

So in steps Claude Maynard over at C/M Cycle in Blythe, California, has patented and trademarked the Time Saver Tube. What it is, is a conventional tube cut in half with both ends vulcanized together to allow a quick change or repair of the tube without having to remove the wheel from the motorcycle. Although the idea has been kicked around before, Maynard is the first to actually jump on the idea commercially. The Cheng Shin Rubber Company decided it was a good idea also, and will be marketing the tubes.

Rather than prop your bike up and take the offending wheel off, all you need do is lay the bike over on its side, break the bead loose and pop the tire off the rim. You will have to cut the old conventional tube in half to remove it, but then you can just slip the new crescent-shaped Time Saver Tube right in. When the tube is inflated the air pressure causes the ends to butt together, forming a round tube. Since you didn't have to bother removing the wheel from the motorcycle, it shouldn't take you more than about five minutes.

An added plus is that since both ends of the tube don't connect together when deflated, you can slip that last portion of the tire bead (where it always seems to get pinched) over the rim at the junction where the two halves meet and not chance pinching the tube.

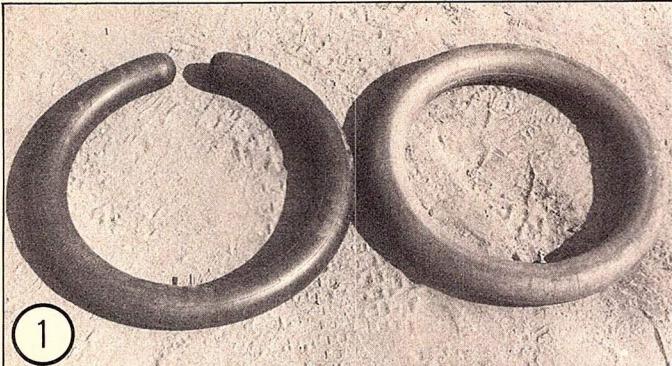
Start looking for the Time Saver tubes to be available around the first of the year in all popular motocross sizes. They should retail for only \$1 or \$2 more than standard tubes. As a quick fix for a frustration flat, they are a handy investment in the old toolbox. Ask for them at your local Cheng Shin dealer by the trademark name of Time Saver Tube, or contact Claude Maynard at C/M Cycle, Blythe, California 92225; phone (714) 922-6786.

III

E-TUBE

Fixing flats faster

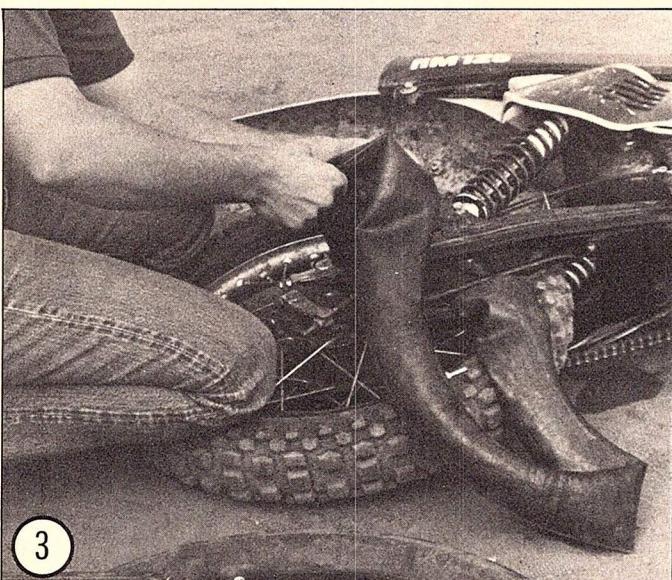
By Dennis Cox



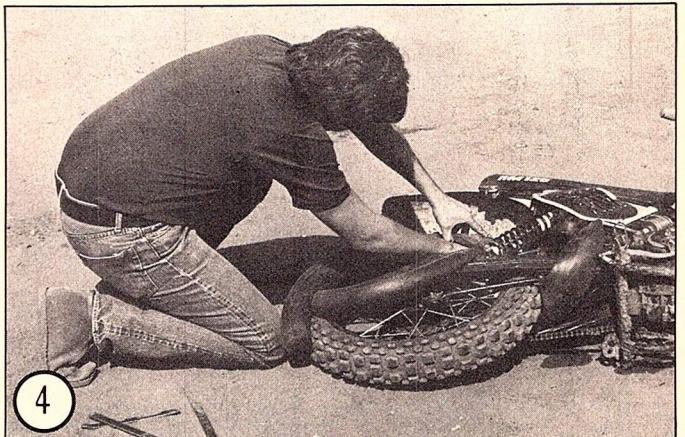
Time Saver tube (left) alongside regular Cheng Shin tube (right). Can you spot the difference?



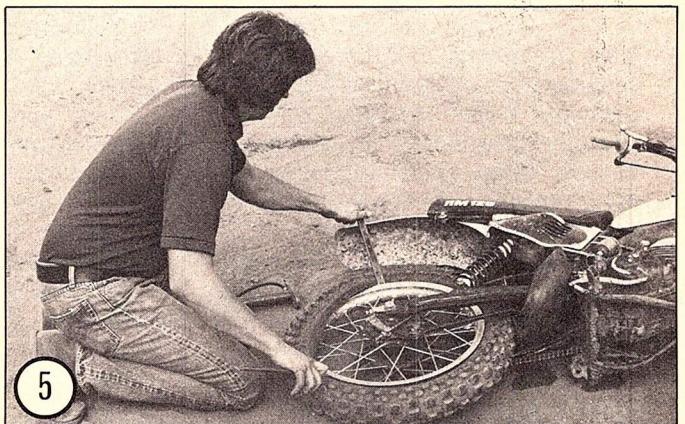
First off, lay your bike on its side, and break the bead loose.



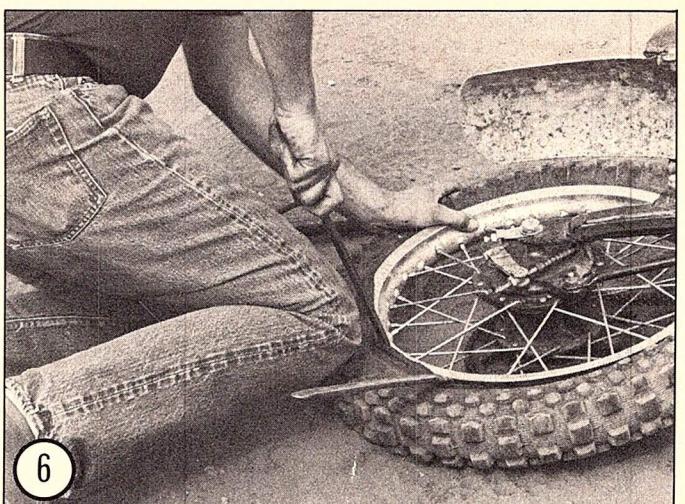
After you've popped one side of the tire off, pull the tube out. You'll have to cut the old tube in half to remove it.



Install the Time Saver tube by sliding it under the swingarm and brake arm.



After sliding the tube in, work the tire back onto the rim.



Use the junction where the two tubes meet to make the final lever onto the tire, and presto-change-o, you're finished.

COMPETITION

TRANS-AMA SUPPORT

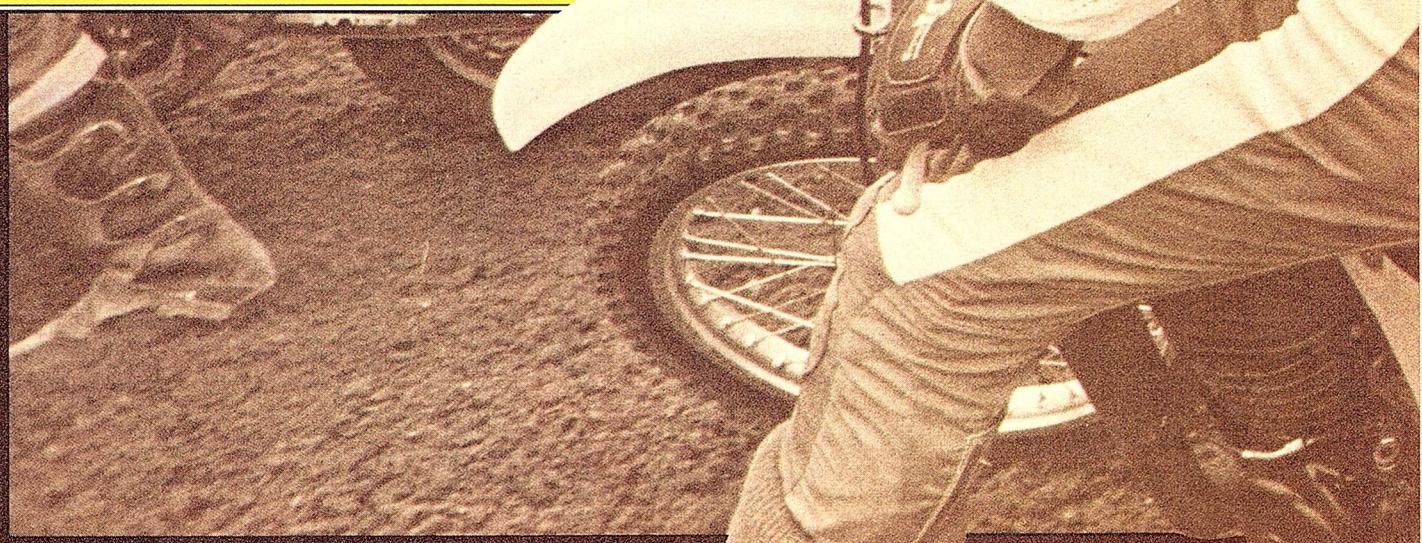
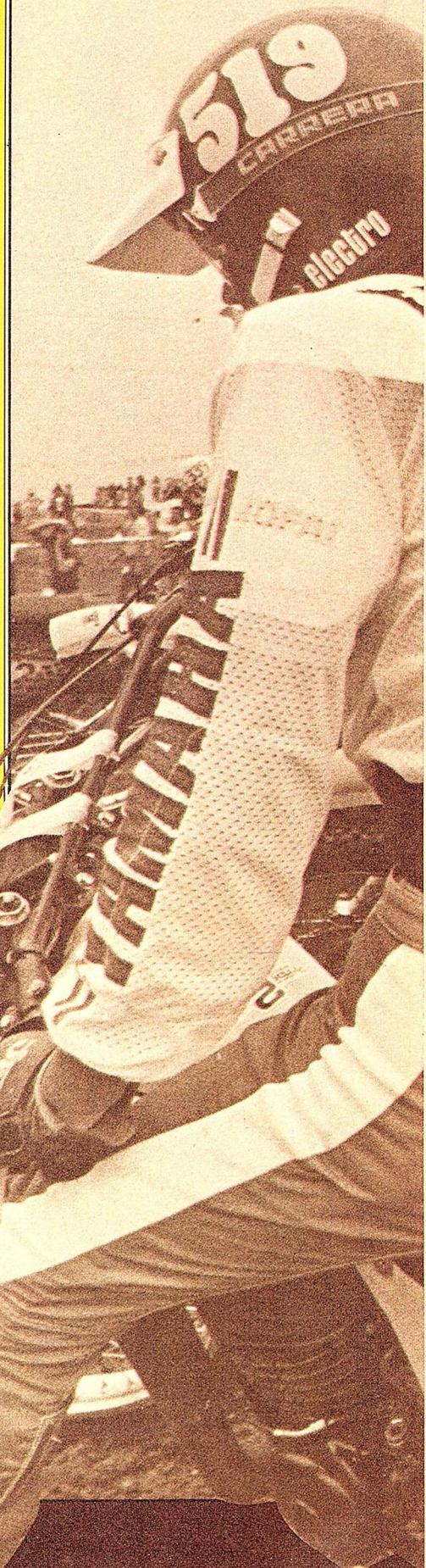
Does the factory hold auditions

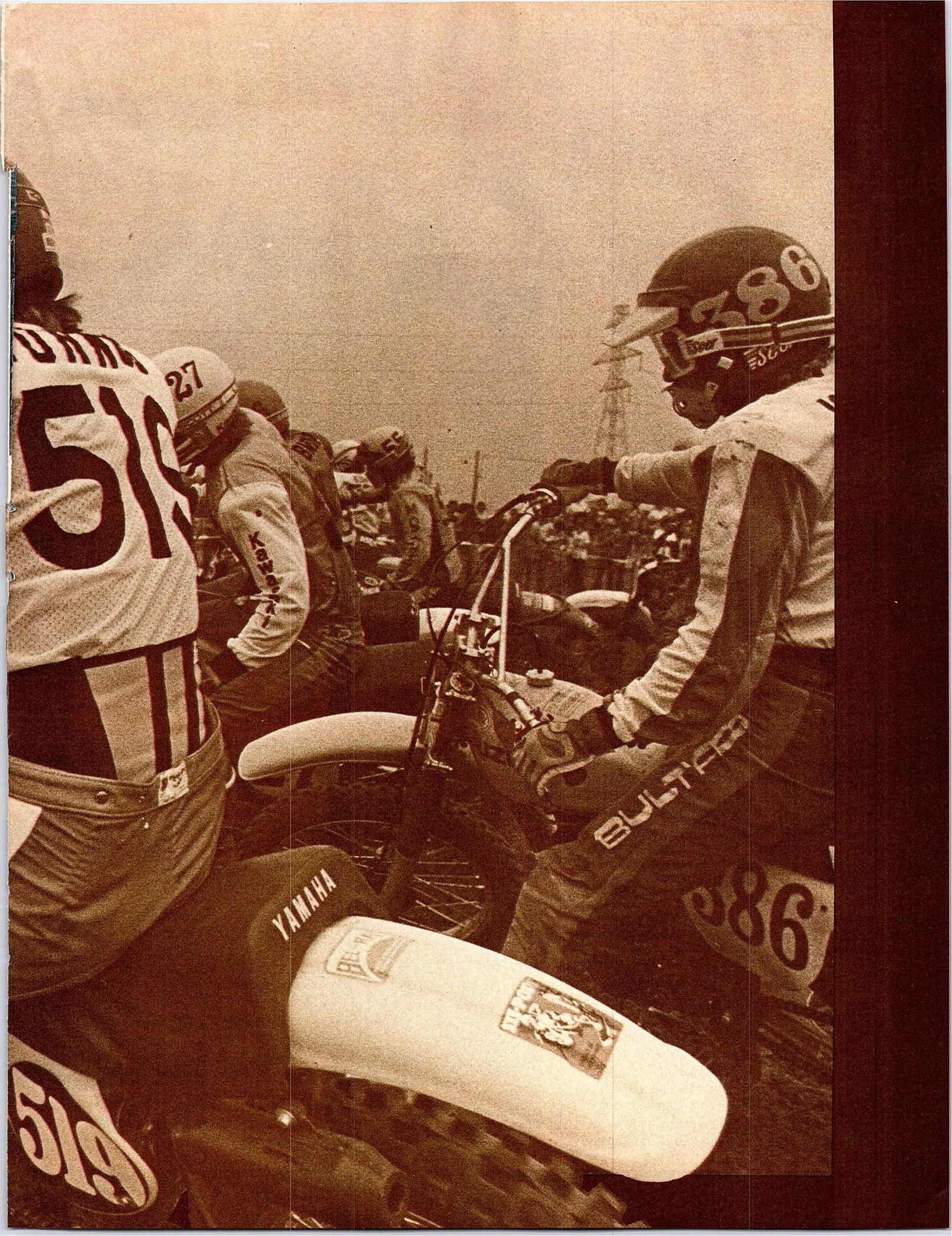
By Jim Gianatsis

□ The Trans-AMA's 250cc Support class was devised as a half-time show, sandwiched in between the 500cc International class, to give promising young privateer riders the opportunity to show themselves off to prospective factory teams. But not since 1974, when Kent Howerton won the Trans-AMA Series Support class over Honda's Marty Smith, has it really been used to give the promising young privateer the boost they needed to secure a factory ride. This year the tables turned again to favor the privateer, and after factory riders Jimmy Ellis and Rich Eierstedt pulled off the Support class titles in 1975 and

1976, it was privateer Chuck Lai Sun who turned 1977 into his personal show.

Chuck Sun, from Sherwood, Oregon, wasn't the only privateer in this year's Series to do well, but he certainly did better than anyone else. Two years ago we got our first look at Chuck as he rode the International class of the Trans-AMA Series with a production 360 Husky, going across country in an old Chevy pickup truck which also served as race shop and sleeping quarters. This year things were hardly much easier for Chuck. Husqvarna provided him with a bike,





TRANS-AMA SUPPORT

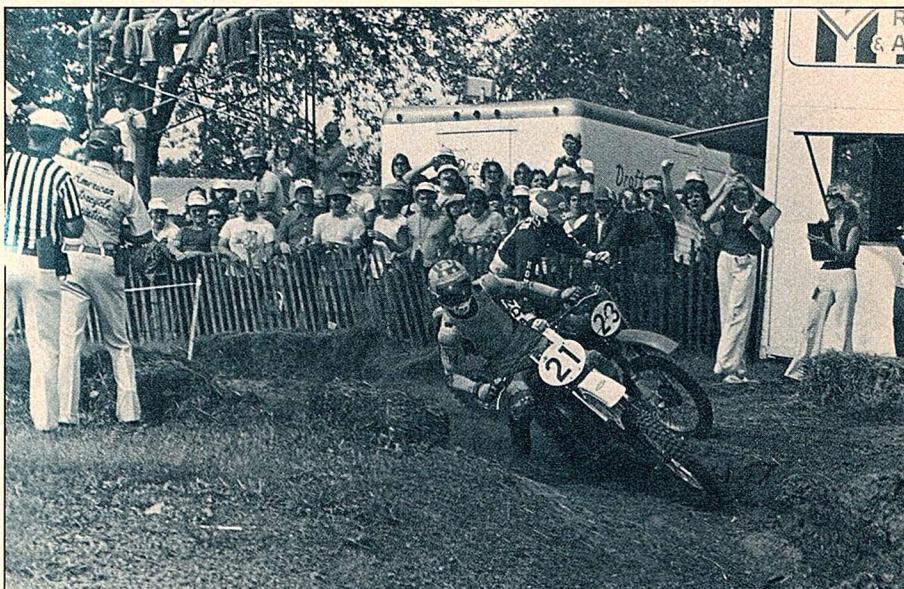
parts and an old van to race the Nationals and the Trans-AMA Series, but that's hardly more support than most privateers receive from their local bike shops or daddy. On the weekends he went racing, and during the week he trained and rebuilt his own bike while driving from race to race. He still slept in the truck or on an occasional motel room floor.

Despite the hardships, the 1977 Trans-AMA Series paid off for Chuck when it was all over. His domination of the opening races of the Series allowed him to build up a huge points lead which cushioned off the attacks of Yamaha factory riders Broc Glover and Mike Bell in the last half of the Series, so by the time they got to the final race at Sears Point all Chuck had to do was coast his 250 CR Husky across the finish line in one moto to secure the Series title. His performance was good enough that Chuck was the first choice of Husqvarna for replacing Kent Howerton as the number one rider on the Husky team for the 1978 season. It was a reward Chuck had worked long and hard for.

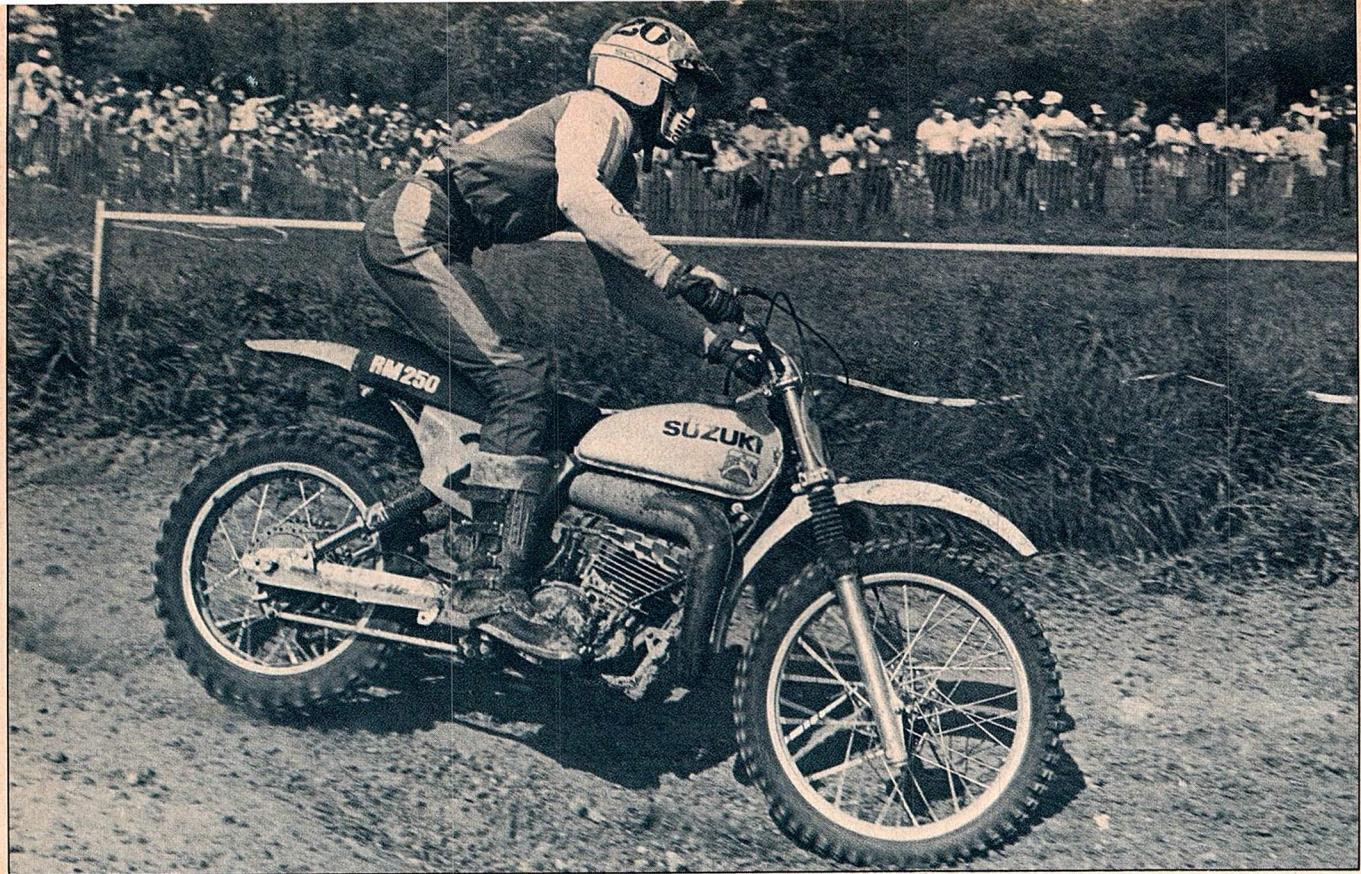
While Husqvarna was happy to have Sun to replace Howerton, who left them at the end of the Trans-AMA Series, it was another semi-privateer who gave Chuck more trouble than anyone else in his bid for the Support class victory. Seventeen-year-old Mark Barnett was the rider who shadowed Sun in nearly every race so fiercely that midway through the Series he was already receiving offers from Honda and Suzuki to become a full factory rider for the following season. Mark was campaigning the Support class as a sponsored rider of Moto-X Fox, meaning he had a mechanic and a bike with parts, but not a salary or major expense money to promote him to full sponsorship status. The Japanese factories felt that Mark, who had two years previously won the AMA's Amateur National Championship, had more potential than anyone else since Suzuki blew their chances with Bob Hannah and Jeff Jennings. Suzuki didn't want to make the same mistake



Semi-privateers when the Series began, Mark Barnett and Chuck Sun had full factory rides signed for 1978 before the Series ended.



Honda's Warren Reid gave Husky's Chuck Sun the biggest fight for the Support class title. In the Series opener at Mid-Ohio, Chuck just edged out Warren by a wheel length at the finish line of the second moto for the overall win.



John Savitski on the FMF Suzuki continued to prove himself to be one of the quickest, most consistent privateers on the circuit.



Three-time 250cc National Champion Gary Jones (73) got the holeshot in Texas, but had a hard time keeping up with the new young stars once they rounded turn one.

TRANS-AMA SUPPORT

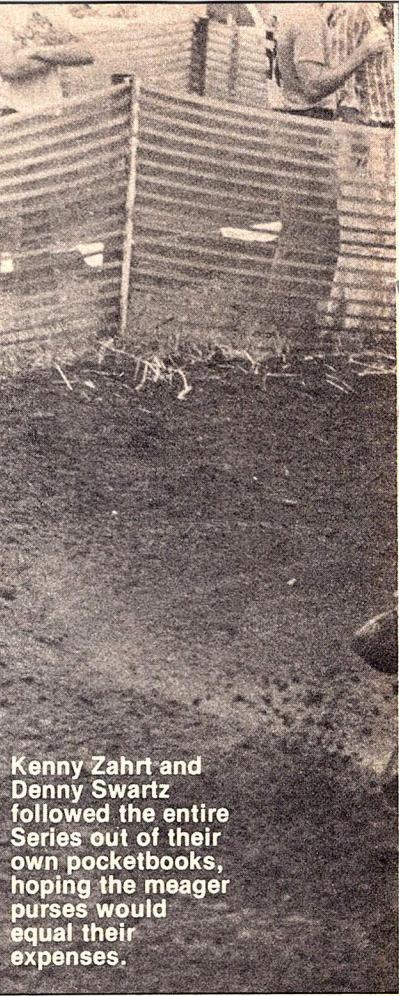
three times, and before the Trans-AMA Series ended they had outbid Honda to make Mark part of their race team for the 1978 season. Moto-X Fox would have to go shopping again for new talent, especially with their other rider in the Trans-AMA Series, Texan Steve Wise, finally picking up solid support from Honda after being the fastest privateer in the 125cc National class for two years.

The factories did well in the Support class, but not as well as they would have liked. Yamaha was looking to clean house with their new 125cc National Champion Broc Glover and teammate Mike Bell, but the first half of the races in the Series were nothing but mud, and the SoCal speedsters had a difficult time keeping their bikes pointed in the right direction on the track when things were slippery. On dry tracks the Yamaha squad gave Chuck Sun one hell of a race. So did Honda's Warren Reid, who seemed to be the best all-arounder of the factory riders in the Support class as he picked off wins in Ohio and Washington. Warren was proving to have a lot of potential in every class from 125cc to 500cc.

One semi-privateer who was expected to dominate in the Support class was FMF's Gary Ogden. After battling Sun and Reid for the win of the opening race in the Series at Ohio, Gary suffered a seriously broken ankle in a practice accident during the week which followed that put him out for the remainder of the year. Hopefully, Gary's fantastic potential and talent will allow him to make a comeback in 1978. FMF still got good exposure in the Series from their other team rider, John Savitski, but it was Odgen who had the real potential for giving them an overall win.

Rounding out the top ten each week were the stars of American motocross who'll probably emerge sometime in the 1978 racing season just like Sun and Barnett did in 1977. Greg Theiss from Omaha, Nebraska, has been racing the National circuit for two seasons now, and at the age of 18 is

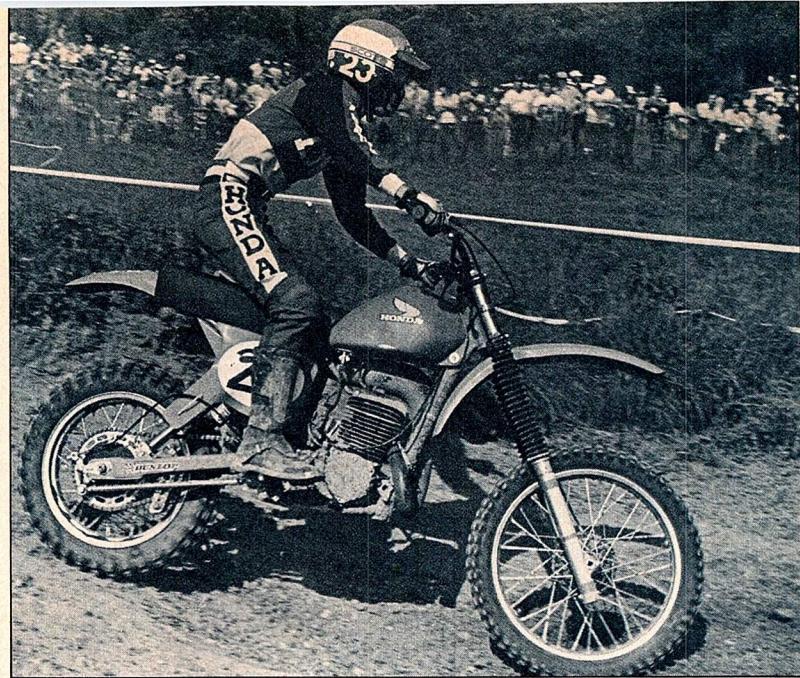
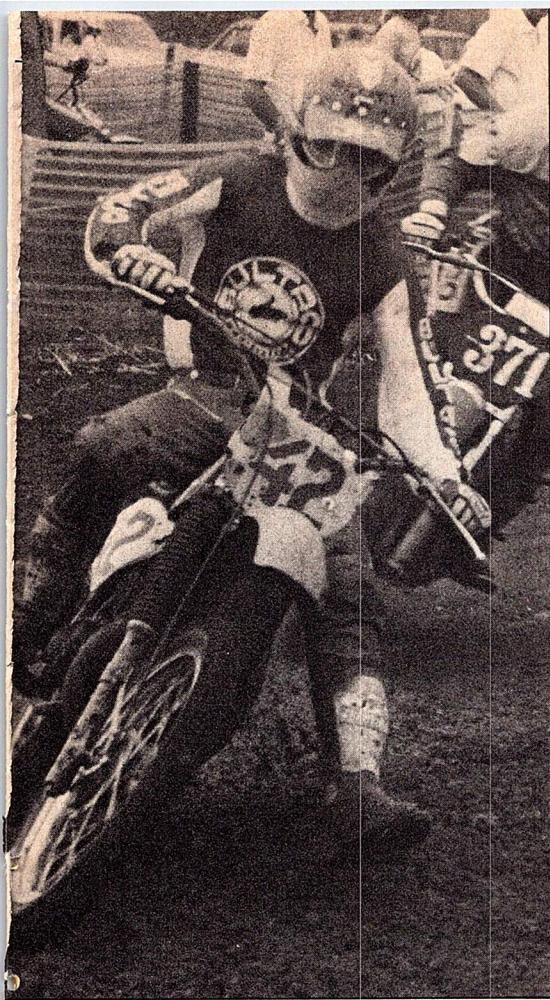
just about to make that increase in lap times which usually comes with two years of serious privateer campaigning. Also included in this category are riders like Pat Moroney, Denny Swartz, Bob Rutter, Darrell Schultz, Mickey Kessler, Terry Clark, John Ayers, Frank Stacy, Arlo Englund, Charlie Halcomb, Perry Klassen, Danny Weir, Tod Perkins, Mike Guerra, Mark Gregson and Robert Shoup. Any one of these riders could be the Chuck Suns and Mark Barnetts of the 1978 racing season. All it takes is the determination to survive the hardships of the circuit, the broken bikes, the small purses and the lack of notice by the press, team managers and sponsors. Since nobody owes these riders anything yet, though, they're going to have to do it the hard way, just like the factory riders who came before them. **III**



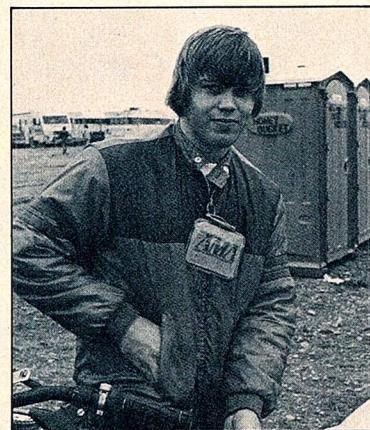
Kenny Zahrt and Denny Swartz followed the entire Series out of their own pocketbooks, hoping the meager purses would equal their expenses.



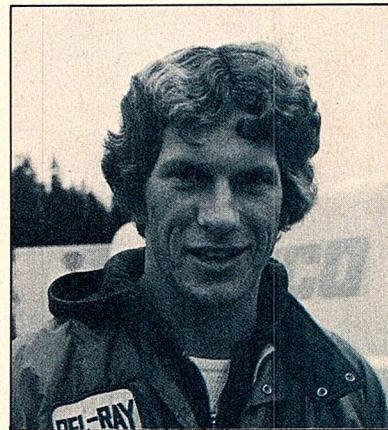
Mike Bell was penalized a lap for jumping the flagged start at Buchanan, Michigan.



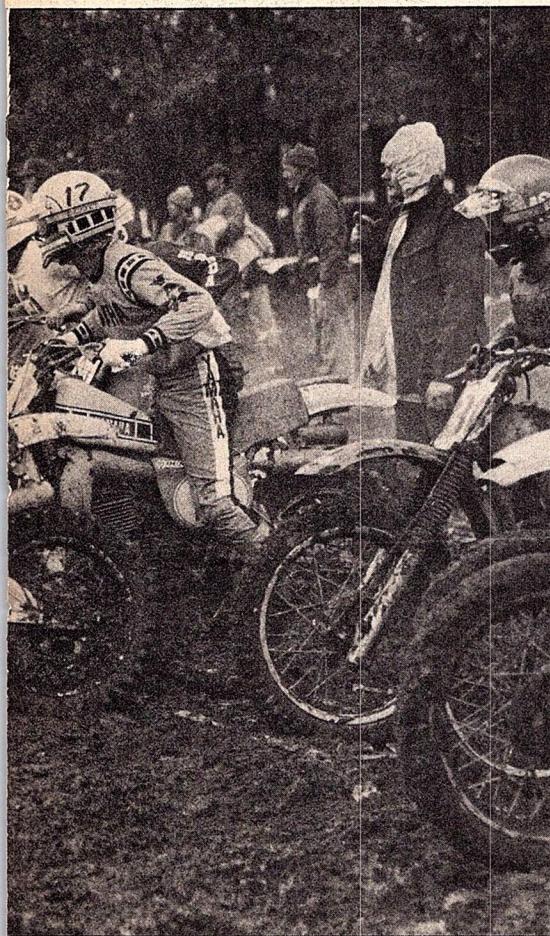
Seventeen-year-old Warren Reid scored his first major win of 1977 at Puyallup with 1-2 moto punches.



Self-sponsored Greg Theiss, now 18 years old, has been racing the National circuit on Huskys for two years.



Northern California's Parry Klassen rode the Western half of the Series, scoring impressive top-ten finishes.



Brothers Jim and Paul Turner used the Series to test new pipe designs that their company, Turner Racing in LaSelva, California, is marketing.



RACE TEST

□ Racing motorcycles are a long time in research and development. They move through a process that includes not only drafting tables, but deep, loamy berms. There are components to be pulled together, dies to be formed, and market analyses to be scripted. Testing can stretch what is already an interminable process out to a *terminal* process in a fast-paced world like American Motocross.

In the time it takes a designer to design, an engineer to calculate and a production line to produce, the product can be a year out of step with what the public wants. But, the drafting-table-to-berm genesis is a requirement in a world of product liability, international competition, currency fluctuation and consumer fickleness.

The Husqvarna 125 CR (CR stands for Close Ratio) breaks out of this time-proven formula. It cracks the mold because Husqvarna AB is a company that is so immersed in pride and quality that a good idea doesn't drift from department to department looking for an influential benefactor to carry it through. Husqvarna's racing department is within walking distance of the production line. There is little or no interdepartmental secrecy in the tight-knit Swedish factory. Many computer-run Japanese factories operate in such a well-oiled bureaucracy that one department could be working on the same thing as another department and neither would know. But when something is cooking in Husqvarna, Sweden, it is cooking throughout the whole plant.

The Husqvarna 125 CR is, in fact, hardly more than a Husky 250 with a pre-shrunk engine. Although they

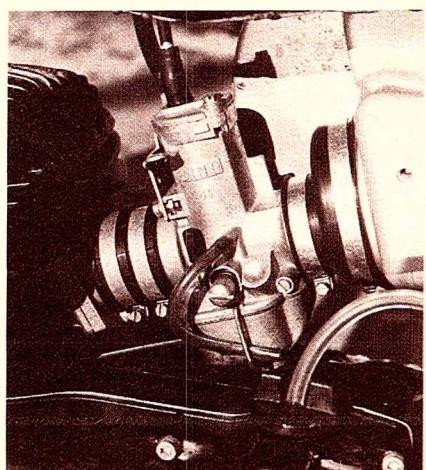
share many components, the 125 CR is a spare and lean racing machine. So lean that when you throw a leg over its tall seat you know that it is going to be a no-frills-ride.

The 125 CR engine is cradled in a heat-treated chrome moly frame.

Chrome moly is a term that is bantered around a lot in the industry, misused normally, but in Husky's case the Swedish steel is lightweight and high-strength. The cases are pressure-fed die cast magnesium. The finish is superb. The crankcases aren't



With magnesium cases and the barest frame on the market, the Husky 125 is still a few pounds more than its competition, but it will last at least a year longer.



32mm Bing Vergasser appears on the 1978 Husky 125 only. The rest of the Huskys use Mikunis.



The handling is superb — a little soft for hard, fast riders, but geometry and design are top-flight.

HUSQVARNA 125CR

Long on legs, short on power

HUSQVARNA 125CR

the only components that get the high-priced magnesium spread. The outer cases and air filter housing are also made from the extremely light metal. Suffice it to say that magnesium costs considerably more than the industry-standardized aluminum.

Tucked into the lightest cases in production goes a six-speed close-ratio gearbox. All the casting on the powerplant is the work of guild craftsmen. The cylinder is a heavy-looking, but structurally sound, design that sweeps into a radially finned head. The compression has been upped this year to a corrected 13.5:1. The piston is forged with a single chrome-plated ring.

Breathing is accomplished through the magnesium air box. The plastic cover hides a foam waffle air filter and the air inlet is protected by an overlapping arrangement of rubber flaps. Next year's works bikes are actually testing the more conventional integral air box, which will probably hit the line in '79. A 32mm Bing is attached by rubber hoses to a reed-valved cylinder. All the big Huskys in 1978 will come with Mikuni carbs because of irregularities in quality control at the German Vergasser factory. Expect the '79 Husky one-two-five to be Mikuni-pumped also.

Spark comes from a Motoplat CDI, which for some reason is equipped with a lighting coil. We don't like dual-purpose cycles, because we only use our bikes for one thing. Motocross! Some of the disadvantages that the Husqvarna 125 CR does have are related to the choice of CDI ignition systems. The basic problem is that the Motoplat CDI on the littlest Husky has a heavy, by 125 racing standards, flywheel.

KEEPING YOU IN SUSPENSE

As much as the little engine floats in the bottom of the frame, the frame itself floats on the suspension. The front forks are Husqvarna forks. Last year's Husky 125 came with in-line axle Betor forks, and although they worked well, they were not cosmetically in tune with the marketplace (read in leading axle). So, the factory just took the good-working leading axle forks off of the big bikes and bolted them on the 125.

Front wheel travel is 242mm, or 9 1/2

inches, without the use of air. Our experience with Husky front forks is that hard riders will find the forks too soft after the fork springs begin to sag. The addition of air caps and between four and eight pounds of air will fill the bill.

The rear suspension is handled by a spindly little swingarm. Yet, it is constructed of heat-treated chrome moly and rides on needle bearings. The swingarm is attached to a set of dual-spring gas Girling shocks, made to Husqvarna specs, and the rear wheel travel is 254mm (10 inches). The Husky 125 is the hands-down winner of the 125 class suspension tape-off.

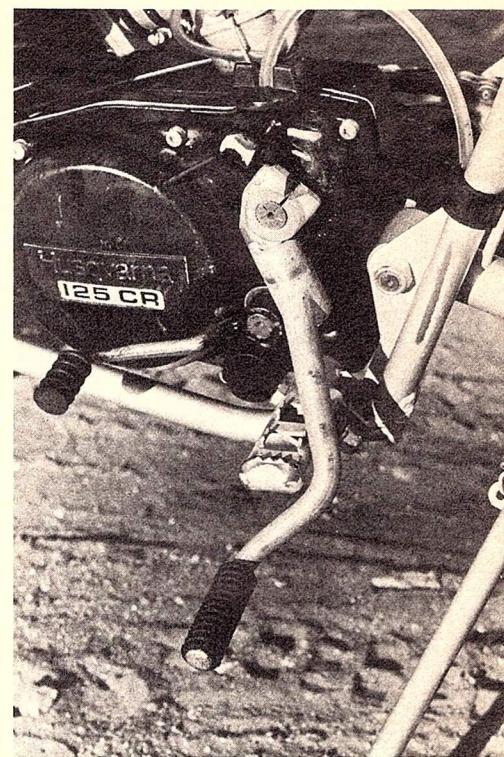
Tidbits on the bike include a full-floating rear brake, alloy gas tank, new conical front hub, strengthened conical rear hub, Magura power levers, double silencer up-pipe, bar-backs, Trelleborg tires, chain tensioner, silver-plated crankshaft bearing, reinforced spoke nipples and, lordy-be, a new, easy-to-use kickstarter.

FIGHTING THE YELLOW PLAGUE

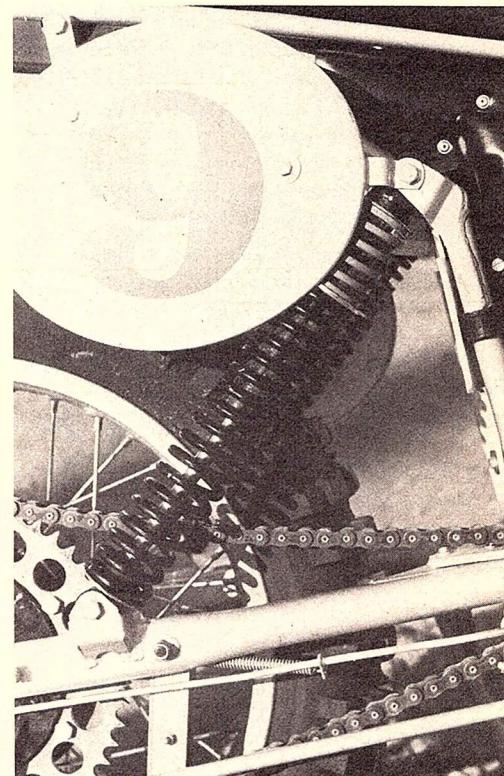
The Husqvarna 125 CR is not as fast as an RM125 or YZ125. Period. On the other hand, the RMYZ don't handle half as good as the little Husky. Period. The dilemma is obvious. Once we run out of cut-and-dried statements, some decision is going to have to be made about the 125 CR.

If your local circuit is like a flattrack with hard-as-rock terrain and no bumps, then the Husky isn't for you. But if your track has a little traction, some gnarly whoops and a generous amount of corners, the Husqvarna can do a number on the yellow plague. The Husky doesn't rev like the Japanese bikes, which is not to say that you don't have to rev it, but rather that it signs off while the yellow bikes are still singing. Depending on the terrain, you can stay ahead of the RMYZ if you play a rapid rat-a-tat-tat on the cogs and never relax your wrist. In deep sand, mud or rough-and-tumble terra firma, the Husky is going to hook up sooner and keep moving longer. The reason that it will move in the muck, but die a slow death on the flat, is traced to the ignition.

The Motoplat CDI has the flywheel effect necessary to keep the engine churning when necessary, but at the same time knocks off the quick



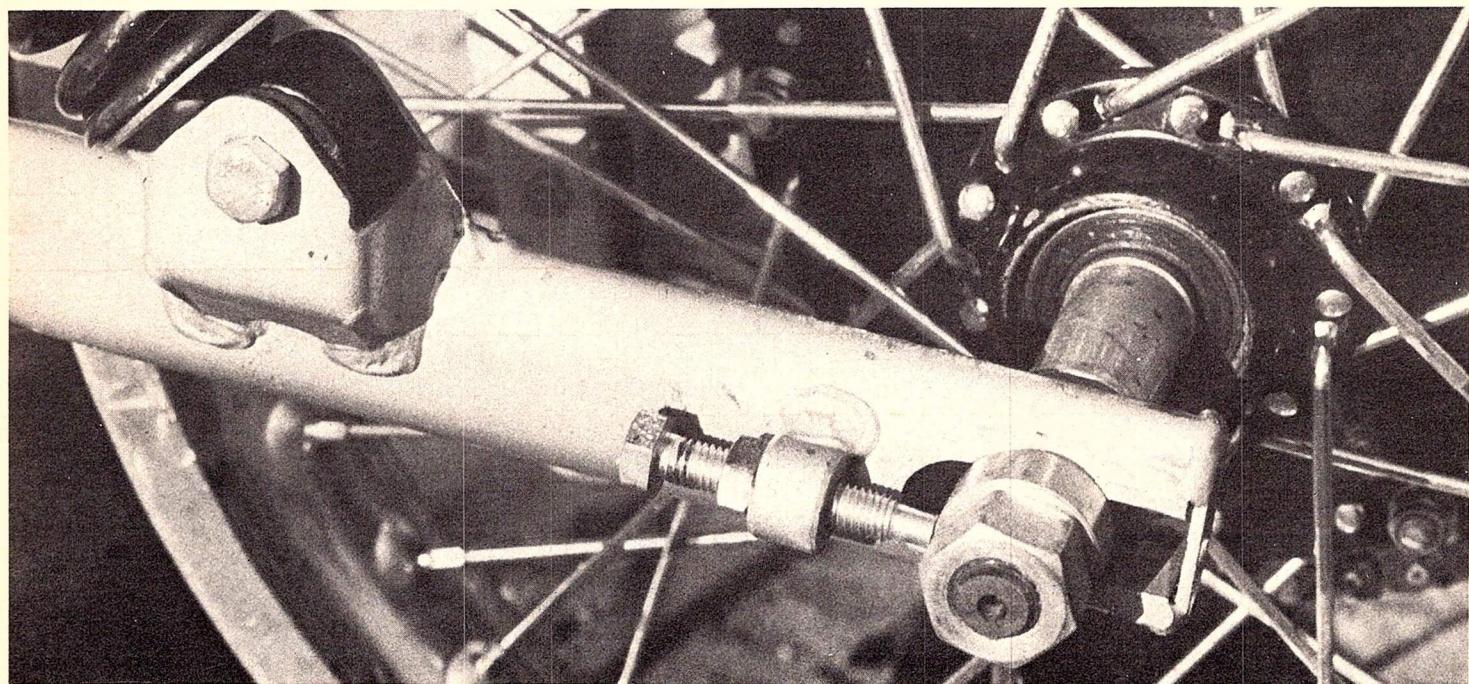
The kickstarter return spring snapped on the first day. It was the only failure during the test.



The rear shocks are dual-spring gas Girlings. They fade sooner than reservoir shocks. The number plate hangs like an albatross on the rear of the bike.



Radical Ron wobbles the front end while driving full-on across the face of this berm.



The chain adjusters are simple and direct. The tires are Trelleborgs and they are good on soft tracks.

HUSQVARNA 125CR

brapp-brapp revving that can be used so effectively on hard tracks.

Engine performance is more grunt than zap. Remember, we are talking about 125s, so if you hopped off of your 400 Maico you would think it was peaky. It isn't for a tiddler. It produces its serious horsepower at a lower rpm than its competition, so you come to a Mexican stand-off. You are buzzing the Husky engine to its max, and your competition is buzzing their RZYM's to their max. The difference is that they are more than one thousand r's above you.

We would have preferred a Mikuni to the Bing carburetor. Bings are finicky, and many times one Bing differs so radically from another that two identical bikes may be jetted totally differently. A Mikuni is a production-line marvel. Tuning parts, information and knowledge about Mikunis abound in America. Where the Bing falls flat is in its ability to carburete cleanly off the bottom. The Husky should be smokin' from the first rotation of the wrist, but for some reason it hesitates before pumpin' ponies. Attempts to re-jet for quarter-turn tuning resulted in modest improvements, but a Mikuni more than likely would have cleared up the lag.

The Husqvarna is an easy starter, thanks largely to the Gunnar Lindstrom-designed kickstarter. But the Husky does not have primary kick starting. The new kickstarter swings out and away from the peg. An inexperienced rider can actually start the Husky. This never would have happened in the old days. Engine noise is an unobjectionable bark as the sound curves upward to a dual silencer system. The bike shifts with ease, but it is necessary to back off the throttle a tad to catch each gear. Full-power, clutchless shifts were not 100-percent guaranteed, but the gearbox is positive once you develop the knack.

PLUSES AND MINUSES

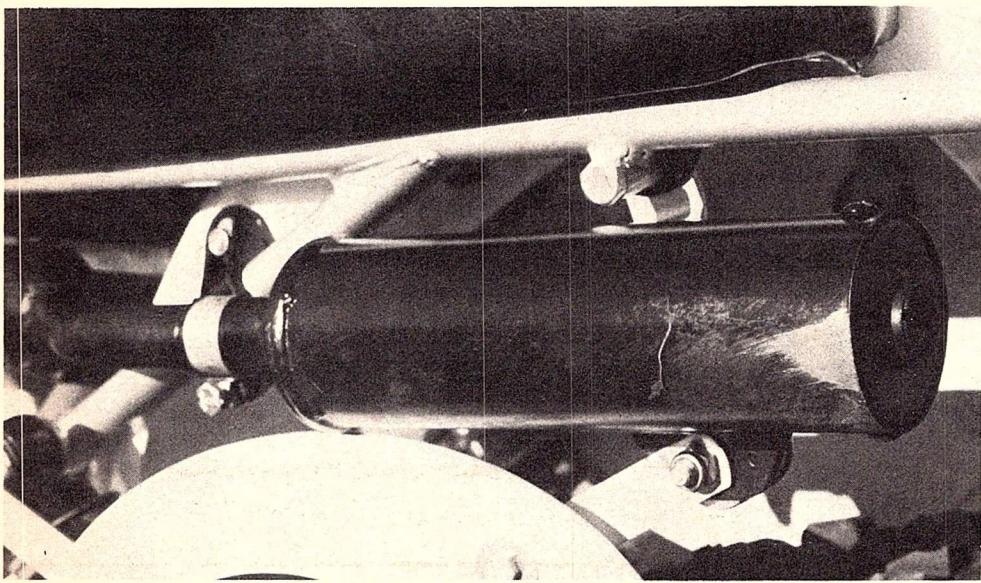
The biggest plus for the Husky 125 CR is that it is a finely built motorcycle. It should last the owner about three times as long as a Japanese model. The Swedes take pride in their product, and hardly anything is cheap or shabby. But then, the price is a high \$1495. Yet even at \$1495 the firm is probably losing money, but they are doing so in order to offer their dealers a complete line of 125, 250 and Open



Jody seeks the hot line in hectic pursuit at Saddleback.



Cornering the little Husky is best achieved by nailing the bars wide open and a gear up.



The pipe comes with dual silencers. The bike ran better, dare we say it, without the rear silencer.

machines. With a short production run on the engines and utilization of the more expensive and robust 250 components, the price is not too high. Except in comparison to its competition.

Because they use the big-bike parts to make the little bike, the reliability factor is extremely high, with a modest weight gain that is offset by the use of only the bare minimum of parts. In many ways, the 125 CR is over-engineered. Originally the compact little six-speed tranny was designed to see service on all the models. So, it was designed to handle a lot more power. The result is that the shift drum weighs several pounds more than necessary. Husky has experimented with machined and lightened shift drums and they have worked fine.

Overengineering and parts interchangeability have given the little Husky a strong frame, suspension and transmission, but not a strong powerplant.

Experience has shown us that the Husky needs more revs, cleaner carburetion and a healthy increase in usable horses. Experience has also shown that when you do this, things start to go wrong. Raise the compression, increase the r's and pump a couple more ponies and the rod will go out. Not the bearing or the silver cage, but the rod itself. Increase the r's significantly and the piston wear factor will have you changing pistons every other race. The heavy flywheel ignition will shear the flywheel keys off the shaft if you rev the bike too high. So, you are in an approach-avoidance situation. On one hand you need to clean up the bottom end bog and add a few more revs, but if you do it you risk a shortened mechanical life of the weak parts of the bike.

All the minus points of the bike fall in the engine. The primary gear is a taper fit on the shaft. It is not held in place by any splines or keys. Thus, if you suffer a seizure or breakdown the resulting jolt to the rear wheel can spin the primary gear on the shaft. If it marks the shaft, you could be in for trouble.

YUMPIN' YIMINY

It is too bad that Husky chose the wrong ignition. Motoplat CDIs with internal rotors are available. Mikuni

HUSQVARNA 125CR

carbs are available. It is too bad that the Husqvarna 125 CR is such a great machine scarred by a few flaws. If you built the ultimate motorcycle with great suspension, good hubs, chrome moly frame and the highest quality accessories, but it blew the clutch every time out, you'd never sell one. Husqvarna has built a great machine. It's worth every penny that they ask for it, but it will not run with the competition head-to-head, except under unusual circumstances. To find out how to get it to run with the RMYZ, check out the DG Performance Specialties Husky 125 in this issue.

The Husqvarna is a nice bike. Every bolt on the machine has a nylon locking nut attached to it. The bike has a dual silencer system. We hate to say this, but if you remove the rear silencer the bike will run better, and still be silenced, although not as well. The side number plates are hokey. We hate them. They are easy for scorekeepers

to read, but the assorted brackets, 8mm bolts and paraphernalia weigh much more than plastic side panels. The seat has an unreachable bolt holding it on way up underneath where a slip fit would work better. The cables and levers are top-flight. The gas tank is well-made and mounted. The pipe bracket on the front of the frame is much too complex for its purpose. The air cleaner is good, but we switched to

a JT Racing Phase 2 just to be sure. The bike is very tall, but comfortable.

All in all, the Husky 125 Close Ratio is a straightforward, well-built machine. If you ride it hard you could win on it stock, but it would surprise a lot of people. With a few dollars more invested, the engine could be brought up to class standards. But then again, who wants to invest a few dollars more in a \$1495 one-two-five. **III**

SPECIFICATIONS

MAKE	Husqvarna
MODEL	125 CR
COUNTRY OF MANUFACTURE:	Sweden
RETAIL PRICE	\$1495

TRANSMISSION

Type	Six-speed close ratio
Ratios	32.8, 24.7, 19.6, 16.5, 14.0, 12.3
Primary	18/70

SUSPENSION

Front	9.5 inches (242mm) spring
Rear	10 inches (254mm) Gas Girlings

DIMENSIONS

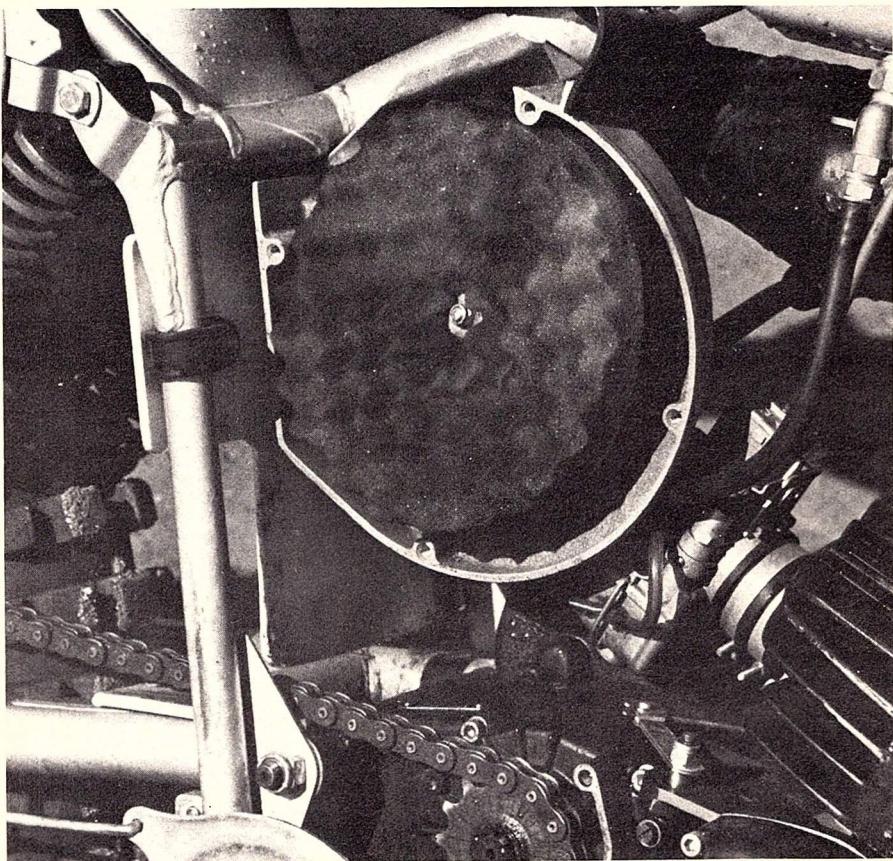
Wheelbase	56.7 inches
Ground clearance	12.8 inches
Seat height	37.0 inches
Weight	207 pounds

CAPACITIES

Fuel	2.1 gallons
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The Husqvarna 125 CR is a tiddler in a big-bike frame. Normal berserk 125 tactics require some stretching.



The air cleaner is a waffled foam unit that snuggles up against a zoot-capri magnesium housing. And we thought that plastic was trick.

DG PERFORMANCE SPECIALTIES HIGH-STEPPING HUSKY

In a cooperative effort between Husqvarna and DG, one specially prepared Husky 125 CR was sent out to do combat on the hectic SoCal motocross circuits. Husqvarna sent DG two stock 125 CRs and carte blanche to do with them what they wished. The results were startling to the jaded eyes of much of the Los Angeles racing community.

David Taylor and his 125 CR blazed a winning path through the weekly wars. The results of DG's labor is available in a special Husqvarna 125 CR kit that includes pipe, carb, machining, porting and matching.

If you have a stock CR, you are going to need to change the carburetor from the stock Bing to a 34mm Mikuni. It is a bolt-on operation. The DG Husky uses a 240 main jet. The carb will improve throttle response from way down low all the way to the top. To increase the point where the top stops, the DG pipe increases revs by almost 2000 rpm. The pipe and carb are almost required changes to get a clean-pulling, high-revving engine.

David Taylor's special DG Husky also has Stage 5 porting, which raises and reshapes the exhaust, lowers the intake, cleans, matches and balances the transfers. This is where the power really starts to come on. The head is then milled 15 thousandths to raise compression, and the skirt of the piston is trimmed a half-inch on the intake side.

As a special racing project, additional modifications were made by DG to the Husky, which they don't suggest that the average racer invest in. A Honda CR125 ignition was hooked up to a Moto-Tek CDI. This resulted in much crisper ignition, faster revs and a broader powerband. It also resulted in considerably shorter engine life. "It

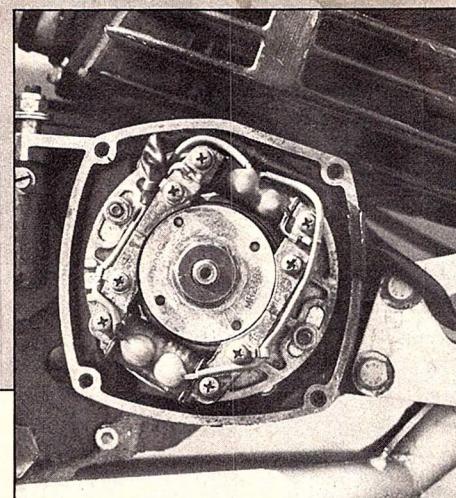
was quite a hassle" to mount and to keep up. Thus, the ignition is not offered as part of the kit.

The DG kit takes the stock Husqvarna 125 CR out to the logical and reliable limits. It provides the needed top end and improved throttle response without the negative side effects of increased maintenance schedules.

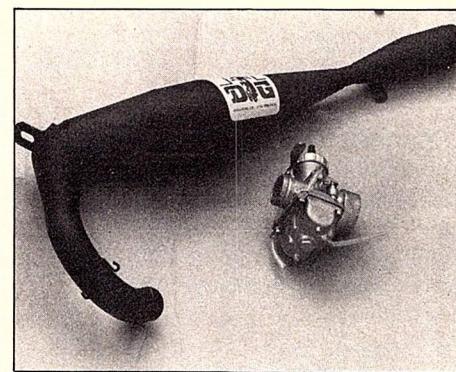
DG RACER — Husqvarna 125 CR

DG pipe	\$ 75
34mm Mikuni	\$ 48
Stage 5 porting	\$ 90
Head milling	\$ 20
Matched cases	\$100
JT Phase 2 air filter	\$ 13
Arnaco LTR shocks	\$134

DG Performance Specialties
1170 Van Horne,
Anaheim, California 92806



Careful preparation and fine tuning aided DG in building a fast Husqvarna, but a Honda CR125 ignition and Moto-Tek black box iced the cake.



The addition of the pipe and the carb alone brings the Husky up to Japanese alphabet racer standards.



David Taylor rode this Husky 125 CR to a series of dominating wins in tough Southern California competition. It is a proven package.

PRODUCT EVALUATION

MOTO-X FOX'S RM125B RACE KIT

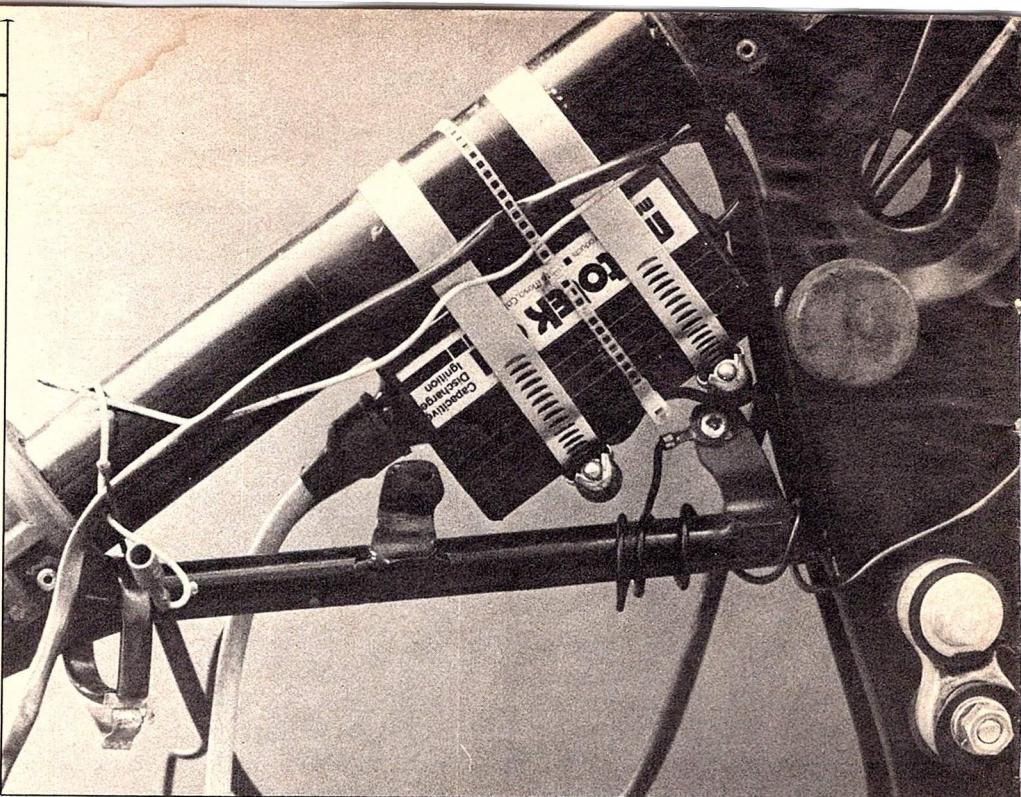
It's hard to argue with success

By Dick Miller

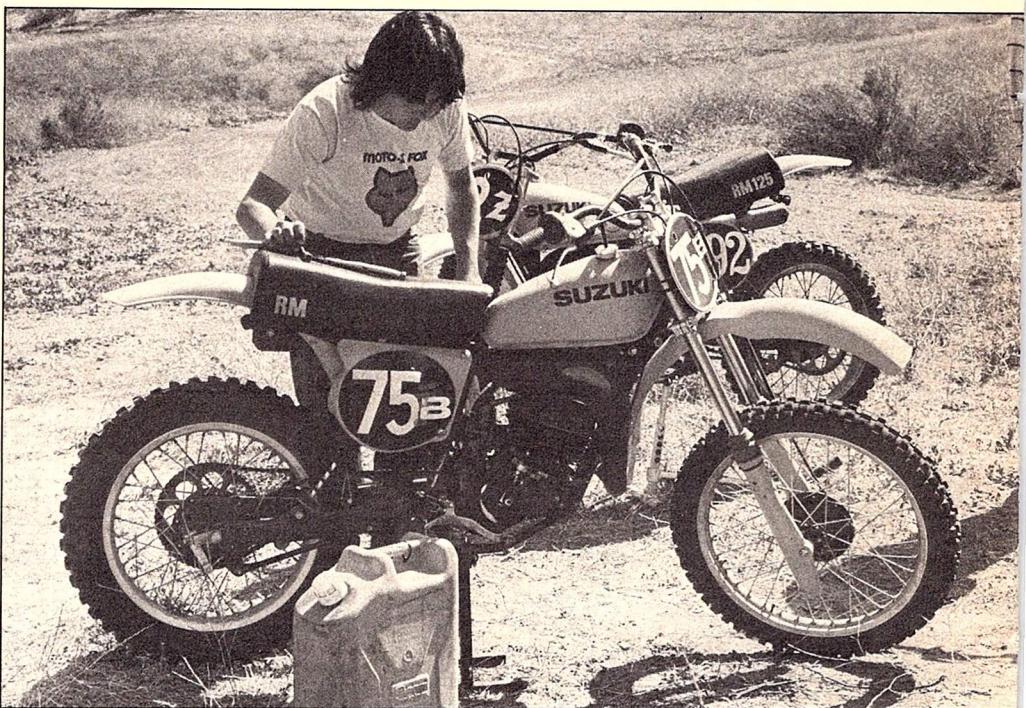
□ Nowhere is the "horsepower race" more evident than in the 125cc class in motocross. With virtually every manufacturer fielding a potent 125 machine at one time or another, it is plenty tough for the privateer to stay competitive.

Although Yamaha took the 125cc National Championship last year, they have been overshadowed on the local tracks by a preponderance of RM Suzukis. The probable reason is the availability of a wide variety of special parts from aftermarket manufacturers and distributors. It seems that everyone has an accessory or two for the Suzuki RMs, and if performance is any judge, then Moto-X Fox has to be considered the leader in performance products for these bikes. They have put their money where their mouth is by fielding the most powerful "privateer" group of riders on the National circuit. With their riders using the Moto-X Fox products, they finished fifth, sixth and seventh in the final tally for the National 125cc Championships. Of the four privateers to make the National top ten standings, three of them were Moto-X Fox riders, two of them using RM125Bs.

When we decided to find out what the MX Fox had to offer, their emissary, Keith Bontrager, was sent to



The Mototek Racing Ignition advances the spark at higher rpm, letting the pipe and carburetion modifications reach their full potential.

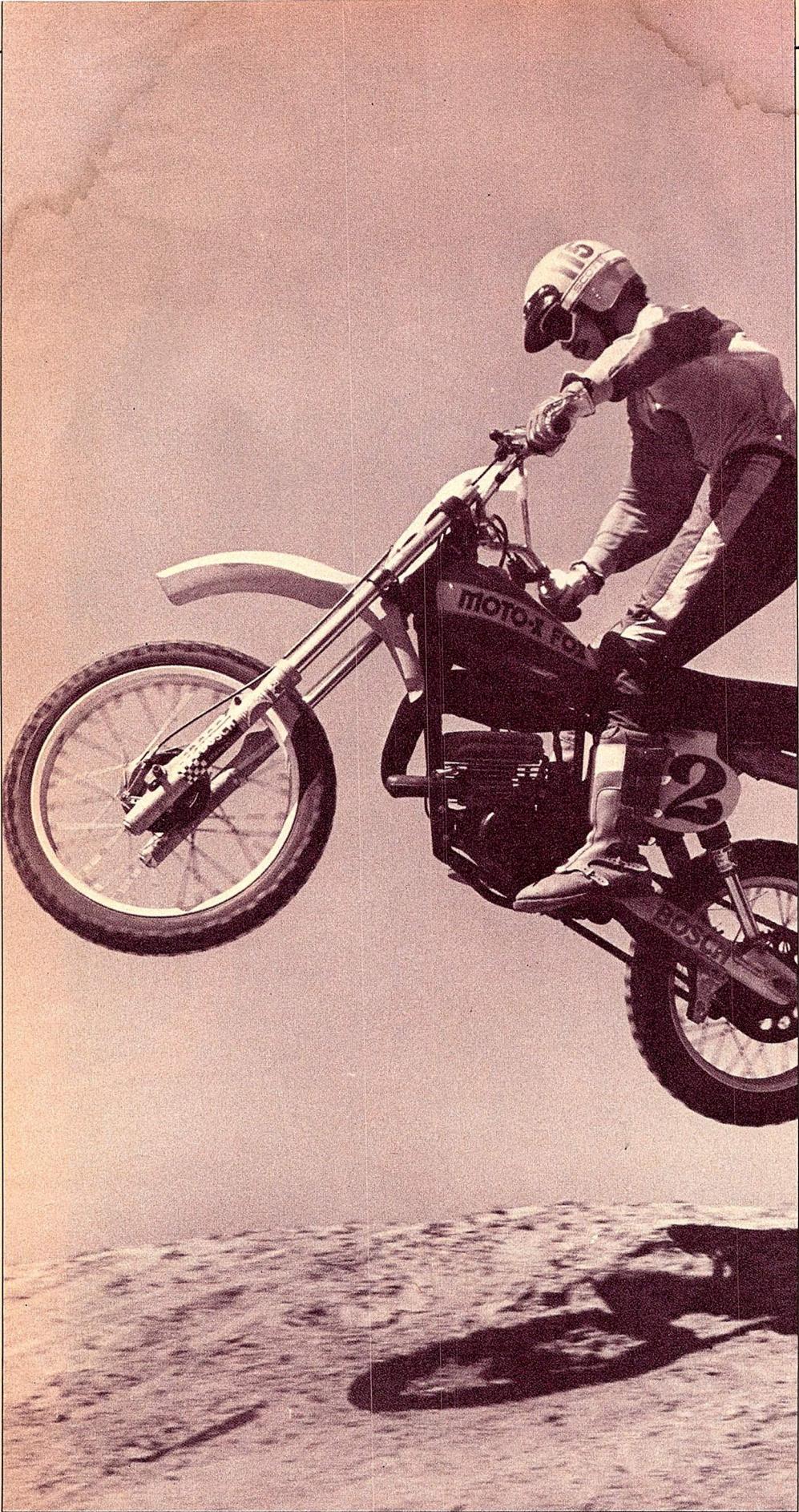


Keith Bontrager of MX Fox fits the pipe and 34mm carb to our test bike. The left side panel will burn unless you shim it out from the pipe. Drill a small hole in the panel and install a rubber bumper — Suzuki #09321-10001.

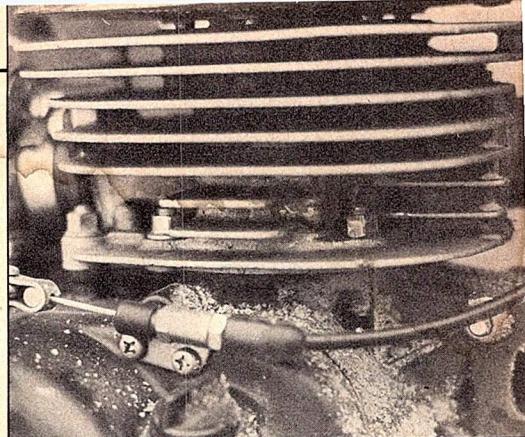
our offices with an armload of parts for us to test as we saw fit. Keith is no stranger to MXA, and our last association with him was when he was involved at Kanemoto Racing. He knows his business! After some tuning and testing at one of the local tracks, Keith left us to fend for ourselves. We have spent the last two months testing,

and have arrived at some conclusions, most of which correlate with Moto-X Fox's statements as to how their products should perform.

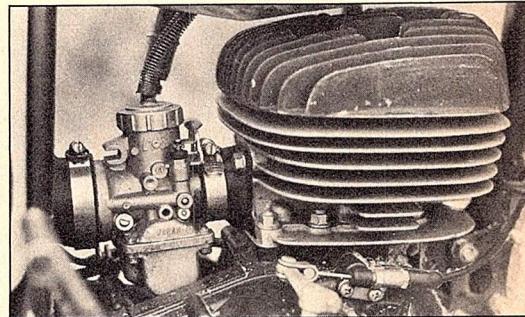
Since they have proved what they could do in the "pro" class already, we decided to concentrate on the junior and intermediate classes with a little bit of our own "pro" input thrown in for



Eddie Cole wrings out the "National" kitted MX Fox RM125. The special barrel is only recommended for top experts because of the critical porting.



We had to grind down a base nut to mount the "National" barrel because of the epoxy fill.



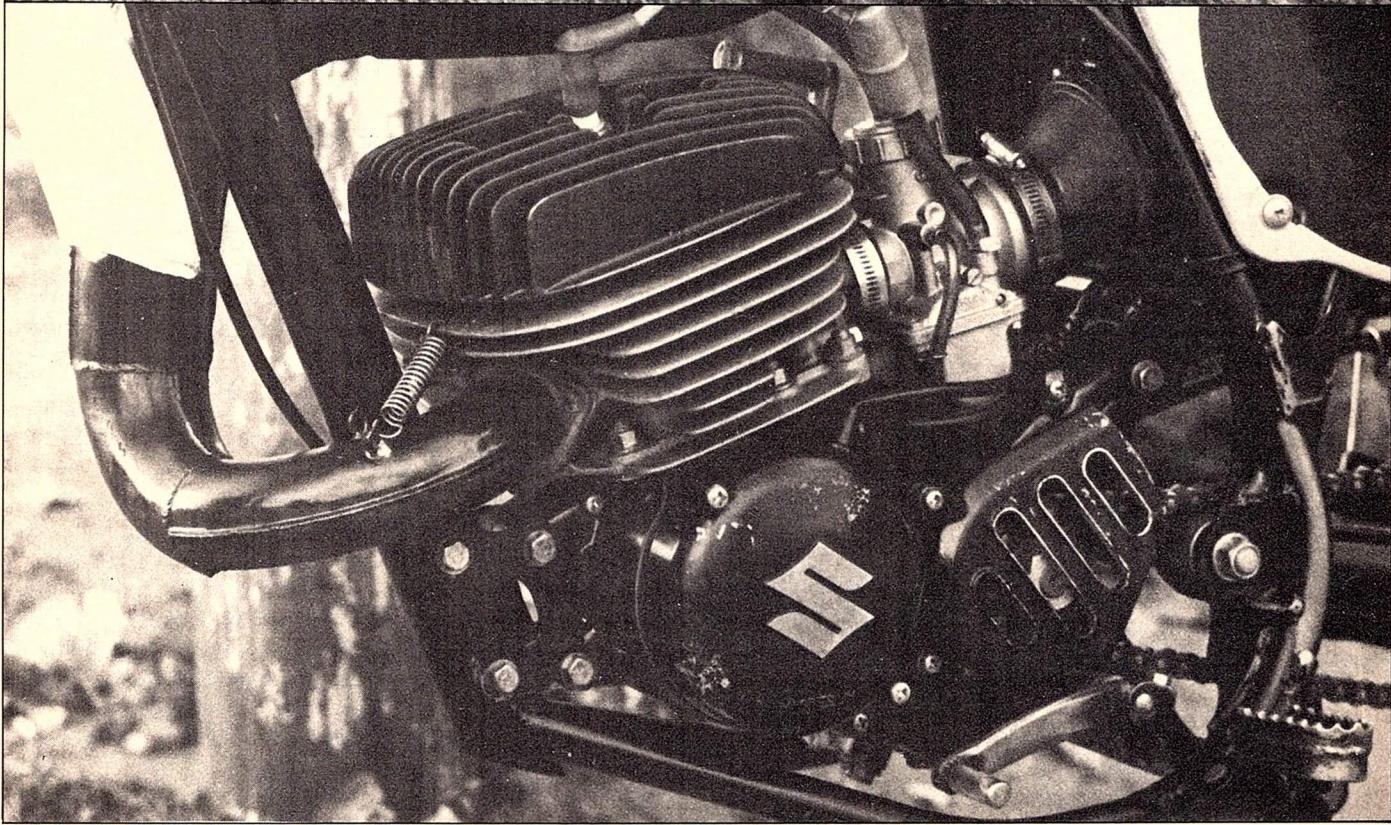
Replace the stock air cleaner boot and manifold clamps with stainless full circle type #28 front and #32 rear.

good measure. All of our results were based on lap times and actual races at local motocross tracks. We started with the minor modifications such as carburetion and pipe changes, and then added combinations of ignition and porting mods.

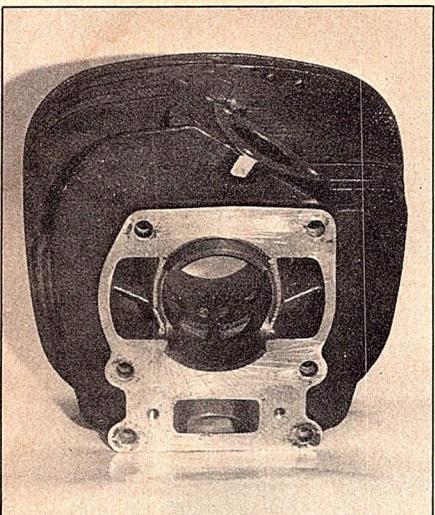
MOTO-X FOX PIPE

RM125B \$84.95

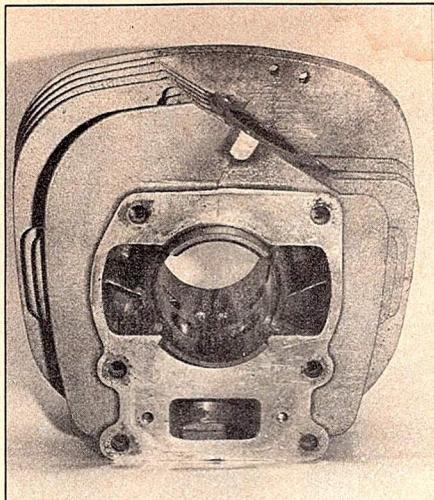
It's extremely difficult to improve the performance of Japanese expansion chambers. Their factories use expensive tooling which is usually precise, with few welds to interrupt the flow of gases. Although some of the American aftermarket tuners come up with designs for expansion chambers that are sometimes better, the results are lost in their manufacture and assembly because of inferior production methods. The Fox pipe is precision-stamped, which means there are fewer welds and a more reliable performance guarantee. All our riders agreed that the Fox pipe was a definite improvement over the stock model. Using the standard 32mm Mikuni carb, we had to raise the jetting three stages, which on our bike (completely stock) was from 230 to 270. This same pipe will work on the RM125A model using the B silencer. The conclusion by all test riders concerning the pipe was



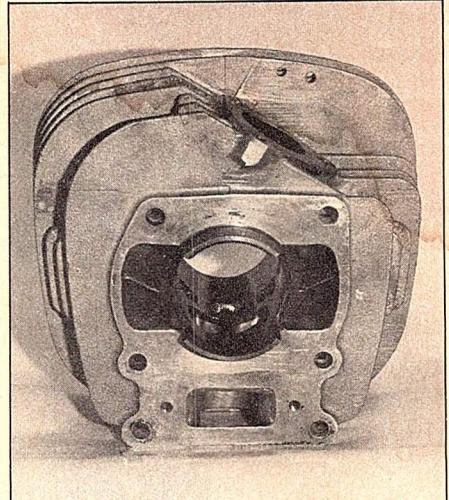
Our Junior 125 rider could handle the "National" ported setup and won using it, but was not as comfortable racing it as with the "Expert" Moto-X Fox kit. We used the Fox jetted 34mm instead of the recommended 36mm Mikuni.



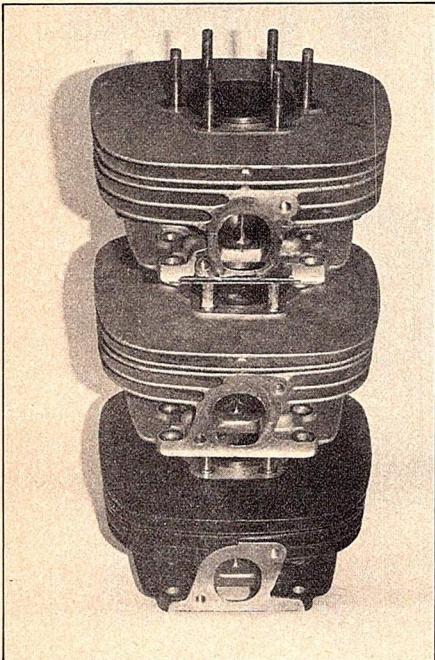
The stock barrel shows the rough transfers and untouched intake ports.



The "Expert" porting shows the hogged-out transfers and intakes. This porting suited most of our riders as the easiest to race on all types of tracks.



The "National" cylinder shows the extensive work on the intakes and exhaust. The transfers are hogged out so far that the outside of the cylinder has to be epoxied for safety.

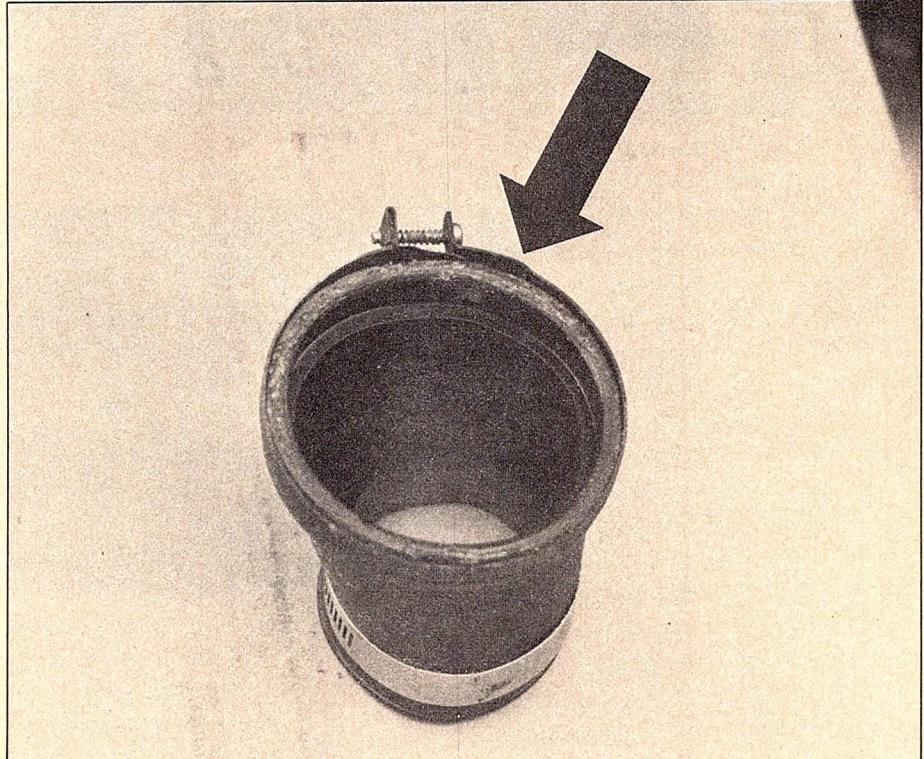


From top to bottom: "National," "Expert" and stock. The carb manifolds for both Moto-X Fox cylinders will have to be ground off so that they will fit the machined cylinder mounting surface without warping the manifold.

that it was "better than stock," "good powerband," and "it winds longer."

MOTO-FOX 34mm CARB RM125B \$39.95

Still using the Fox pipe, we next added the 34mm Mikuni with the Fox jetting modifications arrived at by their testing. The same riders then took laps, and their comments were:



The stock clamp for the air cleaner is the reason for a lot of sanded engines. Check yours and you'll find an air/dirt leak just to the side of the screw fitting.

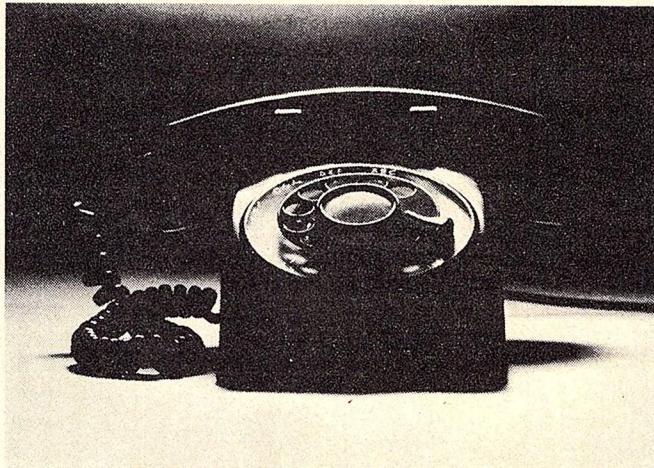
"better bottom end performance than stock," and "shifting was much improved in the powerband." An interesting aspect to this test was the addition of Danny LaPorte, who dropped by and took some spins on both the stock RM that we were modifying and Pat Richter's full-blown RM, which Keith had brought with him. Danny liked the power of the stock bike

with the MX Fox pipe and carb better!

MOTO-X FOX IGNITION RM125B \$59.95

The Fox pipe and carb mods will let the engine rev higher, although it is suppressed by the stock ignition's retarding of the spark advance at high rpm. The addition of the Mototec CDI ignition advances the curve and allows

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the previous modifications to realize their full potential. It's a simple bolt-on affair, and it can be located in place of the standard RM's coil.

MOTO-X FOX "EXPERT" PORTING RM125B \$90.00

We called this the Pat Richter barrel, since it's identical to what he raced at the Hangtown National minus the water-cooled head. His second-place showing on the power-robbing sand course showed that it is a very potent engine. When we added this barrel to the other mods on our stock RM, our junior rider took his first overall win and had a half-a-straightaway lead at the end of the final moto. When it was used by our 125 "pro" rider he thoroughly thrashed a group of local stars with some very impressive credentials. Later he was trying to talk his sponsor into getting him the kit, since it thoroughly outpowered his present modified RM125B.

There was some loss in the low end using this porting, and second-gear starts off the line were more critical. The junior rider has a tendency to let the bike fall off the powerband until he becomes more used to its power curve. A "pro" rider would have no problem adjusting, since most are using all the power of their bikes as it is and would welcome more.

Both porting packages offered by Fox use your barrel and manifolds. They will not work on any cylinder that has been previously modified. The porting usually takes a week. The manifolds are ported and matched to the barrel as part of the porting package.

MOTO-X FOX "NATIONAL"

PORTING
RM125B \$195.95

This is what MX Fox claims to be their ultimate, and is a duplication of Richter's bike as used for his first-American placing in the 125cc USGP at Lexington, Ohio. This porting is to be used in conjunction with their pipe, ignition, and a 36mm Mikuni which will run you another \$49.95. It comes pre-jetted for the package. This setup is not recommended for the junior rider and, as Moto-X Fox puts it, "not for any but the best riders with a tuner." If you buy this setup you'd better know how to jet a bike, since it is quite fussy. We raced it and it is a rocketship. Our jetting, using the "unrecommended" 34mm carburetor, changed as much as four main jet

sizes on different tracks. A lot of work is expended by Fox on this porting, and some poor judgment in jet selection can be quite expensive. We made such a mistake by assuming that our jetting on the day before a race was good for the following day on the same track, only to lose a lower end, because it was much cooler on race day. Luckily, we only fried the rod bearing and didn't stick the cylinder, if you can consider that lucky! Oh yeah, it was in the lead when it quit.

As we stated at the start of this article, Moto-X Fox has put their

money where their mouth is and are using the likes of Steve Wise, Pat Richter, Frank Stacy, Mark Barnett and Mickey Boone to showcase their products. Right now they are the most formidable "privateer" effort in racing. You don't win with inferior equipment on the National circuit, so if you can't beat them, maybe you'd better join them.

More information can be had by writing to Moto-X Fox at 520 McGlinchy Lane, Campbell, California 95008, or give 'em a call at (408) 371-1221. It's only money.

III

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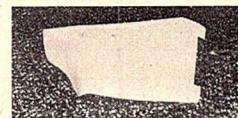
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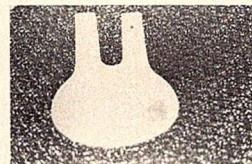


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YZ 125 D	YZ 400
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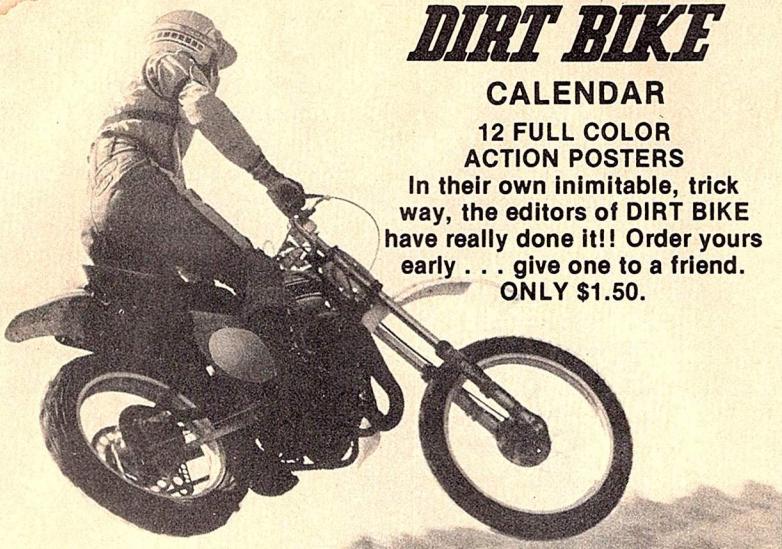
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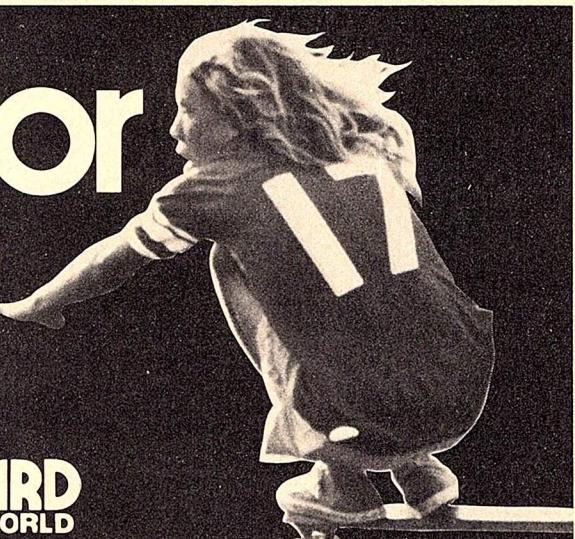
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MAINJET

Continued from page 7

leadership was less than impressive. I went away from that meeting thoroughly discouraged. I reported on the motocross part of that meeting in a Mainjet column several months ago and stated my feelings, but was willing to give it credibility. It was all a joke. Nothing constructive has come out of it, and nothing probably will. It was completely mishandled.

As I write this column there have already been a couple of meetings of motocross promoters across the country. The AMA wasn't invited, since the topic of conversation was the AMA and the running of their particular events *non-sanctioned*. The problem is one of money and TV rights, and the AMA wants both. Not necessarily for the riders, either! The results will be interesting, to say the least, and we will be following the situation. I'll bet the new czar of AMA racing, Doug Mockett, is sweating this out. You remember him, he's the one who gave us the answer on the Glover/LaPorte ruling, among others. His reported 30 to 40 G salary for such decisions is in keeping with the past performances of his predecessors. The way I feel now, Edison Dye is looking pretty good, and I never thought I'd say that again.

The AMA wants us to band together in support of our sport, yet they have given us minimal, if any, leadership and support over the past years, even when the time was not so critical as it is now. They currently claim a membership of 125,000, and yet it was founded in 1924. We presently have close to nine million motorcycle riders in the United States. Somebody is doing something wrong if the *only* representative for the motorcycle rider in America can neither generate membership nor establish virtually any alliance of the sport. The NRA (National Rifle Association) has one of the best lobbies in Congress, and yet membership is a couple of bucks. They give you very little for it, unless you consider a decal, membership card and protection for your rights little. I'm sure that with the proper leadership or promotion the AMA could have done the same, and instead of 125,000 members it could have had at least a million by now. Sorry guys, until I see some positive results or have to ride an AMA event, I'm going to pass on the fees, especially when it's going to ineffective officials who are making close to double my salary.

MAIL ENTRIES

Continued from page 18

Jones. He is a great rider and shows it. He is from Pontiac, Michigan. So, I hope you rewrite your article.

I.B. Looking
Royal Oak, Michigan

RULE CHANGE

Dear MXA:

Yamaha is not guilty of violating the rules pointed out in the November issue of MOTOCROSS ACTION, and the AMA shouldn't try to make an example out of them. What Bob Hannah and Broc Glover did was a clear case of team racing that has seldom been used. Their actions concerned only the Yamaha team and did nothing to interfere with Danny LaPorte's racing. If Burgett, Karsmakers, Bell or Hannah would have directly interfered with Danny, then Yamaha would be guilty. However, I would strongly suggest to the AMA that they change the present rules to prohibit "team" racing as such. If they do not, the true spirit of racing and competition will be lost.

Russ Rever
Sch. Haven, Pennsylvania

DOWN BUT NOT OUT

Dear MXA:

I've torn ligaments in both of my knees and dislocated both my shoulders and had an operation on one side. I would like to know what you can do to fix this without quitting. What about braces? Sorry about the writing, as my arm is presently in a sling.

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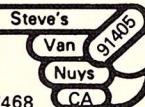
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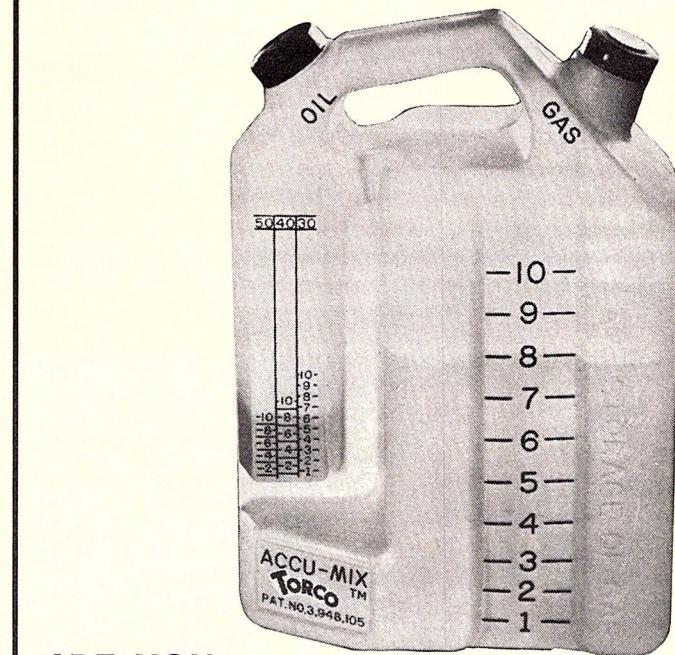
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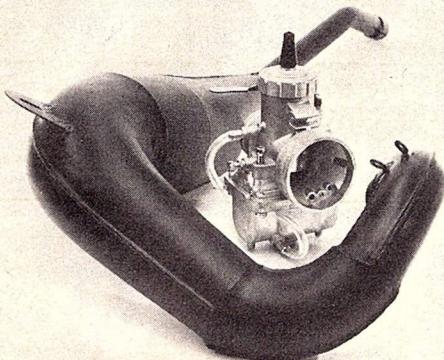
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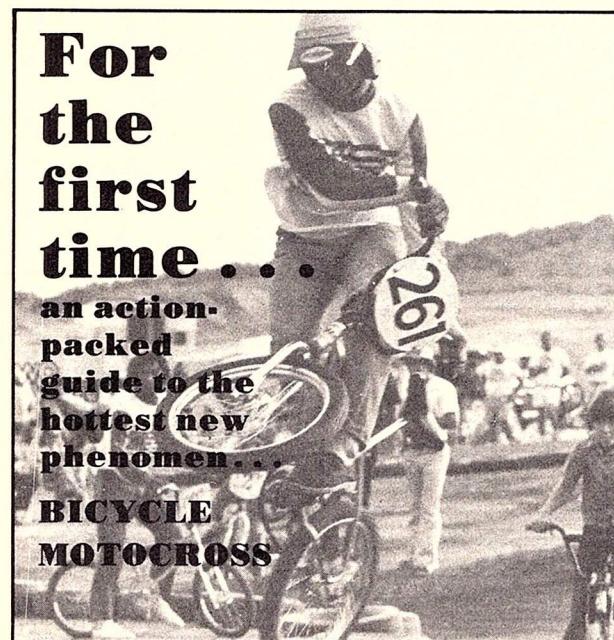


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WINGNUT

Continued from page 16

drop you a line, and that I would get the answers I need. So here goes . . .

The RM250C shocks suck (at least for me they do). So, for a rider my weight (145-150), what sort of shock would work best? (Spring rates, too.)

And on reborning an RM125 and 250, what piston-to-cylinder tolerance does your shop go by? Thanks!

M. Foreman
#0, AMA Dist. 23
Viroqua, Wisconsin

P.S. If you ever get the chance to stop and see an excellent track in Minnesota, see the Spring Creek MX track near Zumbro Falls. It's good enough to do a National or Trans-Am!

You are only one of the hundreds of RM owners who ask the same question. Incredibly enough, you are a Suzuki dealer requesting the right direction — and I'm glad, because most Suzuki dealers won't listen to the demands of their customers. They're stuck in their ways selling stock replacement suspension components. I'm going to let you in on the latest in affordable replacement motocross shocks, soon available for RMs and similar long-travel designs. Lately I've been testing for S&W Engineered Products, evaluating and dialing the all-new "FE Series." The FE shock is specifically designed for RMs and similar forward-mount cantilever positions. The all-new Freon gas shock features a dual-spring combination, allowing us to totally control the rear suspension action regardless of speed or track surface conditions. Rear wheel travel is increased from a stock 8.5 inches on all A, B and C models to a bottomless 10 inches. Stock shock units weigh 6½ pounds versus the FE's 3½ pounds. The S&W's total cost for two shocks and four springs is less than \$110, and Suzuki's replacement cost is over \$180 per pair. I've tested them all, and in my opinion the best-working, most highly sophisticated shock available for the price is the new "FE."

When reboring Suzuki RM cylinders, we set up the piston clearance at two thousandths. The workshop manual specifies 1.5 thousandths. When set that tight, break-in time takes forever, so we set them up at two thousandths, warm 'em up and race 'em. Once the piston hits a clearance of five thousandths, it's time for another bore.

TRANS-AMA

Continued from page 37

played out his game plan with a solid fourth-place finish (7-4) to clinch his third title in a row. Secondly, Brad Lackey, racing just 15 miles from his hometown, ended a long dry spell on American soil. Lackey has been a world contender for four years now, but has not posed much of a threat in America. Sears broke that jinx as Lackey combined good starts and a serious intent into a 1-2 victory on the rolling Sears Point terrain.

The first moto was a hard, fast race with Brad Lackey taking the win over Maico's Gaylon Mosier. Mosier's final ride of the season was tremendous, and if Lackey and Hannah hadn't been so hot, Gassin' Gaylon would have reeled in a Trans-AMA victory.

The second moto was a knock-down, drag-out affair, but unfortunately for Marty Smith, he was the victim of a hard dice with Honda teammate Brad Lackey. Smith ended up on the ground and Brad took over the second-moto lead. Smith ended up back in 13th place for the moto. Hannah took over the battle up front with Lackey, but Brad counted his points and cruised in with the win behind Hannah. Lackey's 1-2 gave him the win over Hannah's 3-1 and Mosier's 2-3. The Trans-AMA ended on a happy note with DeCoster taking the overall and a bunch of young Americans earning his respect.

Results Sears Point Trans-AMA: 1. Brad Lackey 1-2 (Hon); 2. Bob Hannah 2-1 (Yam); 3. Gaylon Mosier 2-3 (Mai); 4. Roger DeCoster 7-4 (Suz); 5. Jim Pomeroy 6-8 (Hon); 6. Tommy Croft 5-10 (Hon); 7. Herbert Schmitz 10-6 (Mai); 8. Marty Smith 4-13 (Hon); 9. Tony DiStefano 11-7 (Suz); 10. Steve Stackable 17-5 (Mai); 11. Rich Eierstedt 16-11 (H-D); 12. Steve Wise 13-14 (Suz); 13. Danny LaPorte 8-DNF (Suz); 14. Billy Grossi DNF-9 (Hus); 15. Graham Noyce 9-DNF (Hon); 16. Rick Burgett DNF-11 (Yam); 17. Gerrit Wolsink 12-DNF (Suz); 18. Marty Moates 15-19 (Hon); 19. Parry Klassen 19-16 (Mai); 20. Marty Tripes 14-DNF (H-D).

TRANS-AMA SERIES FINAL RESULTS:

International Class

1. Roger DeCoster (Suz)	317
2. Bob Hannah (Yam)	296
3. Marty Smith (Hon)	280
4. Brad Lackey (Hon)	252
5. Tommy Croft (Hon)	229
6. Jim Pomeroy (Hon)	226
7. Tony DiStefano (Suz)	188
8. Danny LaPorte (Suz)	165
9. Gaylon Mosier (Mai)	165
10. Steve Stackable (Mai)	145
11. Rick Burgett (Yam)	128
12. Kent Howerton (Hus)	124
13. Gary Semics (Kaw)	118
14. Marty Tripes (H-D)	87
15. Steve Wise (Suz)	85

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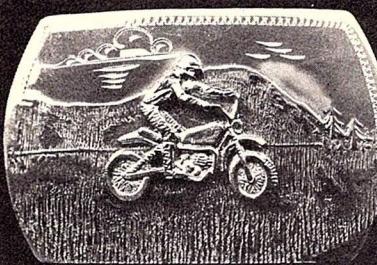
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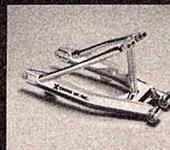
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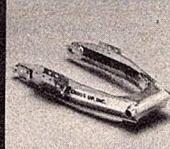
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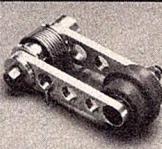
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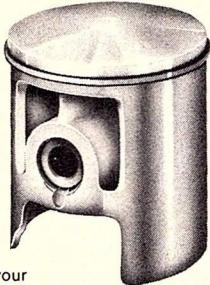
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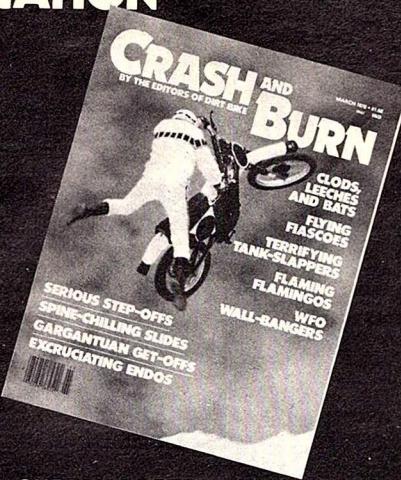
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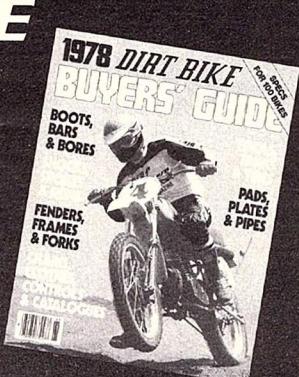
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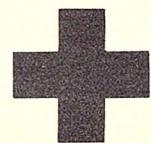
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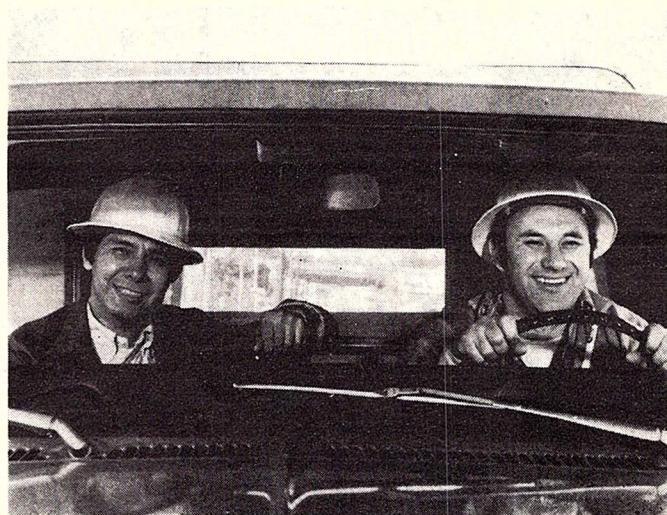
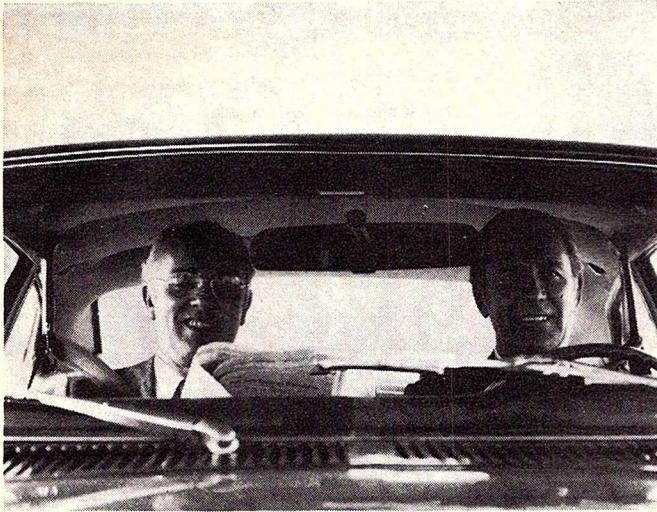
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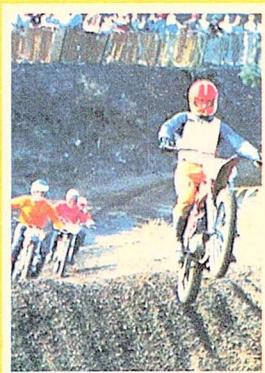


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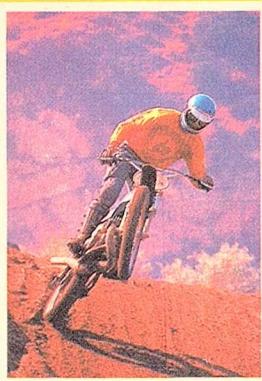
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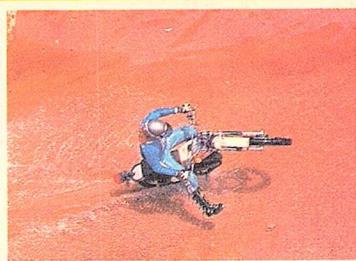
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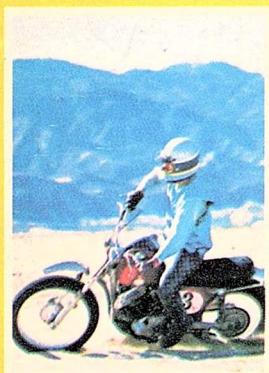


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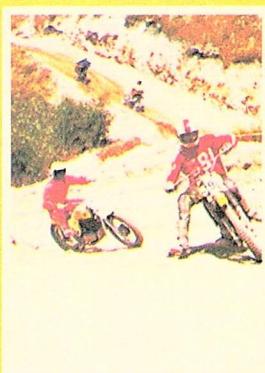


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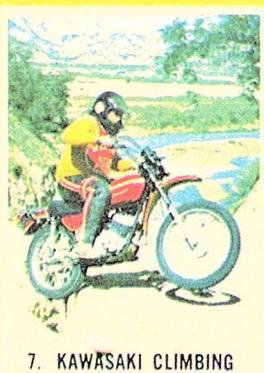


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